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Churches invite the homeless 'out of the cold'

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES/TORONTO, Ont. — Homelessness is a problem that is not new. But it has gotten worse across Canada in the past year. Government cuts to welfare and other social services have forced more people into homelessness. In response, churches in Toronto, St. Catharines and other cities have been offering "Out of the Cold" programs to show Christian hospitality.

The idea for Out of the Cold came from Sister Susan Moran of the Toronto-based Roman Catholic group Our Lady's Missionaries in 1987. Sister Moran enlisted churches to provide a safe shelter and hot meals for homeless people on a regular basis during the cold winter months.

This year in Metro Toronto alone, 33 churches are involved in Out of the Cold. Of these, 22 provide overnight shelter for homeless people and the others provide meals during the day. The churches included are Presbyterian, United, Anglican and Baptist.

Opposition from 'neighbors'

When Toronto's Blythwood Road Baptist Church started its Out of the Cold program three years ago, it faced considerable opposition from people living in the neighborhood. Some neighbors feared that crime or lower property values might result from the church's program, reports Larry Matthews, editor of the *Canadian Baptist* and a volunteer with Blythwood's Out of the Cold program. There was some opposition from inside the church too, but by January 1995, the program's leaders at Blythwood decided to go ahead with the program before the winter was over. Opposition to the program quickly turned around, and people such as Mayor Barbara Hall came forward to declare their support of Blythwood's program.

The program started in January 1995 with seven "guests" and 21 volunteers. This winter, there are about 100 volunteers, 60 per cent from the church and 40 percent from the neighborhood and other churches, says Dennis Bruce, who started and co-ordinates the program at Blythwood.

Respect and a good night's sleep

Bruce sees the program as being "an emergency shelter. It provides an environment where people can be treated with respect and compassion and get a good night's sleep."

Blythwood opens its church basement to homeless people every Saturday night in winter. The guests can get a hot meal, relax, talk with volunteers, and sleep.

Volunteers work in shifts from 5:30 Saturday afternoon until early Sunday morning. The first crews of volunteers prepare a hot supper and sign in guests. Volunteers who arrive at 9:00 clean up after the meal and talk or play cards with the guests.

"We spend time getting to know them," says Bruce, "These guys are very lonely."

He explains that the homeless who come to the program are mostly men, though there are a few women. The guests range in age from in their 20s to over 70.

Television used to be offered occasionally by the church, but not anymore because "the sense of community is broken by it," says Bruce.

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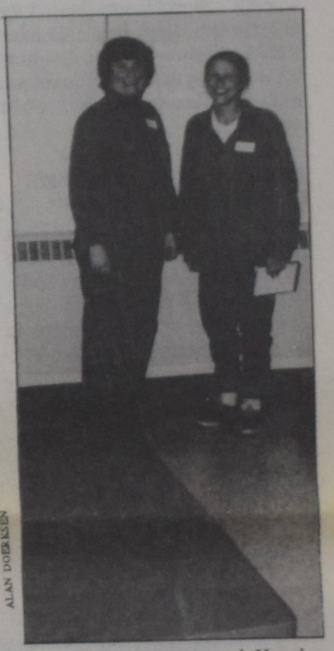

ALAN DOERKSEN

Kathy Petrie (left) and Heather Lekx are volunteers with Queen Street Baptist Church's Out of the Cold program. The church provides mattresses and blankets for guests who stay overnight.

Russian Orthodox leader embraces nuclear weapons complex

Lawrence A. Uzzell

MOSCOW (Keston News Service) — In a Nov. 12 conference at Moscow's Danilovsky Monastery, Metropolitan Kirill of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations openly allied himself and the Patriarchate with the nuclear weapons section of Russia's military-industrial complex.

The all-day conference, sponsored by the World Russian

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CP/TASS

Is the Russian Orthodox church finding security in nuclear weapons?

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News

Volunteers offer listening ear to homeless

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Additional volunteers work the graveyard shift (from midnight to 6 a.m.), and others come in to make breakfast and clean up.

Although the church focuses on helping meet the physical needs of guests, Bruce notes that some of them come to Blythwood's church services. One guest even asked Bruce to have a Bible study with him, and now up to 10 guests are involved with a Bible study each week at the program.

Occasional aggression, health problems

Since the original protests from neighbors, there has been little opposition to Blythwood's Out of the Cold program, says Bruce. Once in awhile there is an aggressive guest or someone with health problems.

Larry Matthews, who is on the midnight shift at Blythwood, says that as many as 42 guests have come out to the program so far this winter. He has the impression that there are more homeless people this winter than last year. "I would guess there are many more people living on the edge of homelessness," he adds. This is partly because of a "ripple effect" connected with the Ontario government's cutbacks on social services, he believes.

In St. Catharines, the first local Out of the Cold program was started by Queen Street Baptist Church last February as a seven-week pilot project. This fall, three other churches in the city have opened their doors to the homeless with similar programs. Each church is open on a different night of the week.

In November, Queen Street restarted its program, which is offered each Saturday evening and is based on Blythwood's program. About 30 volunteers help out with the program, a number almost matched by the number of guests coming out this winter.

More homeless everywhere?

When the program restarted in November, 12 guests came out the first night and 22 on the second night, reports Kathy Petrie, Queen Street's pastoral assistant and a volunteer with the program.

Petrie also believes there are more homeless people this winter than last. Last February, during the program's pilot project, there were fewer people showing up than there are this fall.

Queen Street and other churches running Out of the Cold programs have set up a committee to co-ordinate them together, reports Petrie. Besides the core group of four churches, several others in the city are offering support in the form of monetary donations and volunteers. The churches are sharing some resources like the mattresses guests can sleep on.

Guests come to Queen Street's program with different needs, says Petrie. "Most of them need someone to talk to." Volunteers don't preach to guests but are open to discussing their faith. "We let that happen naturally," says Petrie.

Being good listeners

Knox Presbyterian Church, in St. Catharines, which like Queen Street Baptist is in the city's downtown core where most homeless people are, started its own Out of the Cold program in late November. Sixty church members have volunteered for the program, which takes place on Friday nights.

"Our main intention is to be a good listening ear," says Arlene Maliphant, a member of Knox's mission and outreach committee who is one of the program's organizers. The Knox program will "provide a warm, welcoming atmosphere to get [homeless people] off the street. Their health is compromised.... Nutrition is very poor." But, she adds, "We're not there to preach or convert. If they're going to be preached at, they just don't come. We can do far more by modeling Christian behavior."

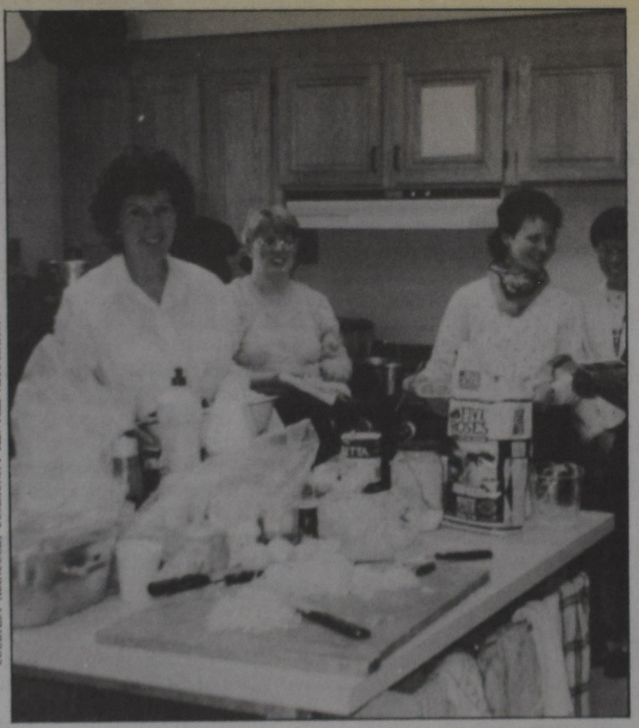
Maliphant also asserts that Ontario fiscal policies are affecting the increasing numbers of homeless people. She hopes that at least three other churches in the city will get involved with the Out of the Cold program so that homeless people will have a place to stay each night of the week during winter.

Community kitchens help people save money, overcome isolation

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO — As many Canadians slip below the poverty line and live on the edge of homelessness, some are finding a solution by forming "community kitchens" with friends or neighbors. In the past six years, community kitchens have caught on in a big way in Quebec, British Columbia and Ontario.

Besides cutting food costs by pooling resources, community kitchens offer people a chance to overcome their isolation, make friends, improve their nutrition and build a community. Churches, social service agencies and ethnic groups have been the main groups to start community kitchens in recent years.



COURTESY AGINCOURT COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

Members of the Cooking Club, a community kitchen offered by the Agincourt Community Services Association in Scarborough, Ont.

Alternative to food banks

Community kitchens are "really growing as an alternative to food banks," says Kim Barnhardt, a publicist for the United Way of Metro Toronto. Food banks are not a long-term solution but community kitchens are, she says. The United Way funds several agencies in Toronto that have started community kitchens. Some of these serve refugees, immigrants, or low-income clients.

"In some cases we provide funding to get community kitchens going," adds Barnhardt. United Way has supplied start-up funds from $5,000 to $15,000 to start community kitchens in low-income areas, in public housing projects and at senior citizens' clubs.

Community kitchens bring many benefits. They "help people to stretch food dollars..., help educate people about nutrition, help to build social networks. From what I've heard, they've been very successful. It's a good solution," says Barnhardt. She knows of at least 20 community kitchens now operating in Toronto. One involves the unusual combination of Portuguese and South Asian seniors.

Empowerment

Community kitchens started in Toronto in 1990, and have grown a lot since then, says Sara Lynch, a nutritionist with Toronto's Department of Health. "We saw a big escalation last year with the cutbacks." Working with Toronto's FoodShare program, Lynch helps to run training sessions for people interested in starting community kitchens. Recently, interested people have been coming from across Ontario to attend these Toronto-based training sessions.

Lynch emphasizes that she is a consultant and that communities need to take ownership of their kitchens.

A wide variety of groups, including many churches, mothers with young children, and single men and women are starting the kitchens, says Lynch. To start, groups need to think about things like how much they can afford to spend on food, what types of food they want to cook, and where they are going to meet.

Participants in community kitchens can empower each other by passing on cooking skills and helping build each other's self-esteem, says Lynch.

Kathryn Scharf of FoodShare also helps lead training sessions for people interested in starting community kitchens. These two-day sessions are presented in Toronto every month or two and have been very popular. "Every session we had has been full," says Scharf. At the sessions, a model community kitchen is set up, and issues like how to organize a kitchen, budgeting, food safety and handling are discussed.

Occasional conflict doesn't negate results

Conflicts sometimes arise at community kitchens because of people not doing their share of the work or not coming in on time, says Scharf. Some of the kitchens shut down because they can't sustain themselves financially.

But generally the kitchens bring "really positive" results. Scharf has no doubt that the increasing popularity of the kitchens is connected to recent government cutbacks. People are "desperately wracking their brains" for solutions, she says. The kitchens are "a good way for people to cope with a lot of the issues related to poverty and isolation.... People feel so much better when they feel connected to their community."

Russian conference calls for preservation of nuclear weapons

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People's Assembly (*Vsemirnyrusskinarodnysobor*) and devoted entirely to the topic of "Nuclear Weapons and Russia's National Security," issued a closing statement supporting the maintenance of Russia's nuclear arms capacity and implicitly criticizing Russia's suspension of nuclear tests.

Proud role

After reading a welcoming letter from Patriarch Aleksi, Metropolitan Kirill began his own remarks by reminiscing proudly about his and the Patriarchate's role in the "struggle for peace" during the Soviet period.

Referring to the Soviet regime of the early 1980s as "our side," he told the assembled defence and military-industrial leaders that he rejects the view that the church was "too politicized" during that period. He said that he is firmly convinced that the Patriarchate was not guilty of "conformism" in campaigning for Soviet foreign policy goals such as the exclusion of NATO missiles from Western Europe.

Recalling that in the 1980s he "sincerely insisted" on the need to reduce nuclear weapons, Kirill noted that some might accuse the Patriarchate of having now changed its position. But he said that in his view "our line remains the same, the geo-political situation has changed."

Critics of the Patriarchate, he said, should remember that the word "security" is a biblical word, that it appears in the New Testament book of Revelation.

He spoke against the expansion of NATO to the east, which he said might be one of the signs of the coming of the Antichrist. He also endorsed the theory that the 21st century will be a period of conflicts not between ideologies but between civilizations, and that religion will play a role in those conflicts. "One would have to be blind not to see this," he said.

Maintain nuclear arms

Nuclear scientist Radi Ilkayev, a member of the Presidium of the World Russian People's Assembly, warned the conference that banning experimental nuclear explosions is harmful to Russia's nuclear potential. He said that test explosions are needed to ensure the reliability and safety of the country's warheads.

In apparent endorsement of his warning, the conference's closing statement demanded the "immediate adoption and implementation of scientific-technical programs to preserve nuclear weapons technology and to maintain the reliability and safety of nuclear armaments."

The closing statement, issued in the name of all the scientists, military officers, clergy, politicians and others who took part, also declared that "gathering within the ancient walls of the Danilovsky Monastery, we proclaim our devotion to Orthodox Christian values and to the idea of love for the Fatherland. We are against the use of force in international relations. Today we again recall that the Soviet nuclear weapons inherited by Russia were never weapons of war, were never used on the field of battle or against civilians, and, moreover, that the nuclear balance created precisely by us saved the world for a long time from the threat of unilateral nuclear blackmail."

Holy bombs!

Another nuclear researcher, Pavel Florensky, told the conference that since the Soviet Union's atom bomb was created in the Sarov region, Russia's nuclear arsenal to this day is under the patronage and protection of St. Serafim of Sarov.

Kirill said that his meetings with Russian scientists specializing in nuclear arms had "spiritual importance" for him in that these scientists are among the *podvizhniki* of our century. "Podvizhnik" is a term from the Russian Orthodox mystical heritage, traditionally applied to monks and other believers who perform great feats of spiritual asceticism.

Thinkbit

"People are more sympathetic with the extreme to which they're going than with the extreme from which they have come."

Source unknown

Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

What's a school for, anyway?

Most of the major political philosophers of the Western world have devoted at least some of their writings to education. Plato, for example, believed that the teaching of youth is a task properly belonging to the polis, or city-state. Because it matters to the polis that its citizens be courageous, temperate, just and wise, it must accordingly show concern for the process whereby these virtues are instilled.

This entails that the city directly involve itself in training the young in such skills as geometry and dialectic. The law may even censor literature to prevent the defenders of the city from reading anything that might dampen their courage and thus impair their ability to protect it.

In many respects, Aristotle was more pluralistic than Plato. He protested the latter's totalistic approach to politics which placed a premium on unity at the expense of diversity. Aristotle has come to exercise an influence on traditional Roman Catholic and conservative approaches to politics. Yet even Aristotle argues that education is primarily a state responsibility, because the state has a right to ensure that its citizens have the degree of civic virtue necessary to its continued existence.

CC FILES

Plato (left) and Aristotle, as depicted by Raphael in a wall fresco at the Vatican.

Assumption about school's place

Many constitutional democracies, including Canada and the United States, have followed Plato and Aristotle in assuming that schools properly belong within the sphere of government. To this end the general populace is subject to taxation for purposes of establishing and maintaining public schools.

But what is a public school? In North America it is frequently assumed not only that "public" means "government-controlled," but that it also means "religiously neutral." It is not uncommon to hear even the most enthusiastic liberal individualist argue that the public schools are a principal means for facilitating tolerance and encouraging a sense of common nationality among the country's divergent ethnic and religious groups. This was the conclusion of Lois Sweet in her series "The Fourth 'R'" published in *The Toronto Star* and aired over CBC Television this fall. Michael Valpy in *The Globe and Mail* has also echoed this sentiment in the wake of last month's Supreme Court ruling.

But this is to place too much power in the hands of a governmental institution. One does not foster tolerance by eliminating the very differences that make it necessary. Rather, the task of government is to do public justice to all individuals and communities within its territorial jurisdiction. In short, it ought to respect legitimate diversity, and this includes a diversity of schools rooted in disparate religious worldviews.

No surprise from the Court

It is not surprising, given the longstanding Western tradition of vesting responsibility for schooling in the governmental authorities, that the Supreme Court should have decided as it did. Nor should it have been unexpected, given the Court's historic unwillingness to make decisions with broad policy implications, that it would rule as narrowly as possible against extending the protections of section 93(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*.

Ironically, the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "parents shall have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children" (Article 26.3). If the Court is unwilling or unable to acknowledge this, then it may be necessary to return the matter to the political realm and hope for a more favorable response there. In the meantime, we would do well to pray that God will change the hearts of the governing authorities that they might do justice to all.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Editorial

Only a priest can deliver us from self-imprisonment

Casey VanderStelt of Hamilton has a special ministry that seems to baffle a number of people. How do you explain that this lumbering giant, with size 15 shoes and hands that could crunch all the bones in yours if only he did not have such a soft heart, regularly sits down with prisoners or other troubled people to listen to them and to speak heart to heart with them about the pain in their lives.

His ministry is called S.I.P. — Self-discovery of Imprisoned Persons. "Imprisoned" refers to more than jail walls, he says. It first of all refers to the walls we build around ourselves. Self-discovery is the process of opening up the deepest vaults of our souls.

Casey specializes in the rare practice of soul communication. Not too many people are comfortable with that.

In fact, Casey did an informal poll, he tells me, of some 2,000 people in the Reformed community and about 2,000 inmates (of the reformatory community?) about the nature of communication. He asked them what percentage of people they knew would engage in four different forms of communication. I don't know whether the people he polled even knew they were part of an ongoing tally, but I do know that Casey meets a lot of people on an informal basis, that he responds to calls from people hundreds of kilometres away just to allow them an opportunity to unburden, and that, in so doing, he does get a pretty intimate look at the human condition.

The way we communicate

From his contacts, Casey gathered that 95 per cent of people engage in on-the-run chit chat — "How are you?" "Nice weather we're having," and "My, you look chipper this morning" — the kind of talk that requires no reflection or deep interest in the other person. The "Casey poll" further shows that 85 per cent of people engage in discussions of issues and topics and sharing of jokes — the kind of talk that requires thinking, but need not involve the heart.

But only two to five per cent of people meet regularly in small groups to take off their masks and share their life stories. And less than one percent have a one-to-one, heart-to-heart, totally open relationship with another person. Casey calls that the David and Jonathan model — when you become one soul with another person, sharing both the best and the worst.

Christians less open?

The percentages do not differ much between Reformed people and inmates, Casey tells me. And to think that a large majority of the inmates he talked to came from broken homes. In fact, Casey thinks that the intimate "David and Jonathan" form of communication is even rarer in the Christian community than it is in the inmate community.

I don't know how accurate Casey's figures are, but I find his analysis believable and helpful. I believe that there is a fear in the Christian community of opening up to each other. I have that fear myself. There are thoughts in me that I have never shared with anyone.

Now it must be said that Casey's exposure to the intimate thoughts of human beings is mainly with men, especially in prisons. So it may be that the figures do not apply to women. Perhaps women are more apt to pour out their inmost thoughts to other women. Or could it be that there is a selective outpouring taking place even among women?

Whatever the case may be, it is curious but somewhat understandable that there is less openness in the Christian community compared with other communities. I believe that our concept of sin and shame has something to do with that.

Reasons for shame?

I often experience this when I watch a particularly good movie or read a book that has a lot of integrity. I am amazed at how honest the characters are. But then, I tell myself, these characters do not care whether anything they do is sinful or not. Not that they have absolutely no concept of good or evil, but they seek their "salvation" in being honest. And since they do not feel accountable to God, or have given up on religion, they can afford to admit to things that would make some of us blush. When you have a naturalistic religion, when reality extends only to what's observable to the senses, then there is no shame.

Yet it must also be said that if one could be honest anywhere, it should be in the Christian community. After all, our salvation does not depend on whether or not we have kept the law. Why worry about what other people think of us when God is our judge, and Jesus has been condemned on our behalf?

Prisoners of fear

And should we not expect that in the Christian community there will be many people who will not judge us, no matter what we have done? Some people say that too many fellow Christians don't really listen, or they are uncomfortable with questions and struggles, so they quickly come with "answers." Or they can't keep a secret. That may be true, but the fault probably also lies with our fears. The best solution is to go to a person who has faced his or her own brokenness.

Casey believes that we cannot be totally open with God unless we are grounded in a totally open relationship with another person. He himself was imprisoned for half a century in his own fears caused by loneliness, feelings of rejection and frustration, he says. Being liberated from that has taught him how to minister to others.

If Casey is right, then the priestly side of our office as believers is seriously underdeveloped. Too many of us want to be prophets (I know the truth and my truth shall set the people around me free), and too many of us want to be kings (I'm in control of my life and, the Lord willing, of your life, too). We need to learn to sit down with others who suffer and listen, for hours, if need be. We need to spend time pleading on behalf of others with God. We need to be priests after the order of Jesus Christ, if only for our own sake.

BW

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Religious institutions need no further protection

The Nov. 22 issue of CC features a letter from Bernard De Jonge and one from William Veenstra, both of which deal with submissions by the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada's Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG) to the federal Minister of Justice on the matter of human rights and sexual orientation.

The Oct. 11 issue of CC led me to believe that Classis Hamilton's criticism was that CCG had acted without authority. De Jonge's letter seems to say that there is more to the issue. Unfortunately, the "more" appears to have a distinct homophobic ring to it. I hope I am wrong.

I would like to contribute to the dialogue by raising a number of questions to statements made by De Jonge. He writes that the mandate of the CCG is "to speak the mind of the church." Is this, in fact, an accurate statement of the committee's mandate? In this connection, is the phrase "mind of the church" necessarily synonymous with Report 73? I would like to know the exact role and mandate of the CCG. De Jonge raises a valid point when he states, "The CCG is not another CPJ. I agree, but the question remains: Just what is the CCG and how and to what extent should its witness and function differ from that of CPJ? It would be helpful to me to have an explanation of that difference.

Wholesale discrimination?

De Jonge says "Christian organizations, Christian schools and Christian housing developments could now be challenged to grant the same rights of employment and housing that are offered in the secular world because of what has been publicly stated as a sentiment of the CRC." Does De Jonge mean that by reason of the official position of CRC as set out in Report 73, the CCG should urge the government to *deny* equal housing and employment rights on the basis of homosexual orientation?

If CCG is to speak the mind of the church (whatever that is) must it then also urge others to join us and attempt to convert them to that "mind"? Would success in this endeavor then be reflected in wholesale discrimination against gays and lesbians? Why not just outlaw their practices and be done with it?

Churches are exempted

Perhaps that's not what De Jonge is saying. Perhaps he only wants CCG to make the government aware of Report 73 so that the church and its members may be protected. He states: "The church could be confronted and even legally challenged in court by its own members arguing that what the church concedes to the general public as a basic human right, it cannot deny to its own members with a homosexual orientation."

That strikes me as a rather novel conclusion, not based on precedent.

The Ontario and Canada Human Rights Codes, for instance, have long prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex. Yet I have never heard of anyone using either of those provisions to force the CRC to open its offices to women. Does the fact that the law prohibits discrimination by reason of religion or creed mean that an atheist can demand to be hired as a minister in the CRC? In fact, to the contrary, don't these legislative provisions protect the rights of the CRC by exempting religious organizations from the application of non-discrimination provisions in appropriate circumstances?

De Jonge notes that the submissions made by CCG may have the effect of conveying to church members with homosexual orientation the idea that they "have more rights outside the church, because your church will not permit inside what it condones outside." It appears to met that De Jonge misses the point. There are innumerable practices that the church must condone in society while not permitting its members to engage in those same practices. Or is De Jonge suggesting that when the official position of the church was against dancing, the CRC should have encouraged the government to enact legislation preventing others from engaging in that activity as well?

Treatment of gays and lesbians more important

De Jonge indicates a concern for the gay/lesbian members of the church. I share that concern. Indeed, I am much more concerned about the CRC's treatment of its homosexually orientated members than I am about the CCG's alleged misrepresentation of "the public sentiments of the CRC."

Report 73 urges the churches to dialogue with and continue to respond with compassion to its gay and lesbian members. That will keep the church busy and perhaps even cause the CRC to revisit and reconsider Report 73. Who knows, in time, the "mind of the church" may even change. It has before.

Meanwhile, I find it difficult to accept that the current "biblical position" of the CRC to the effect that "homosexual practices are incompatible with the will of God" could possibly serve as a blueprint for CCG's submissions to the government on issues of "public justice for everyone" in Canada. To use the report in that manner is, in my opinion, to promote injustice and arbitrary discrimination. It may leave the church defenceless if another group, at another time, should convince the government to curtail the rights and freedoms the church now enjoys.

Wietse Posthumus
Toronto, Ont.

The sum of HCH is greater than one part

In a recent issue, Nandy Heule wrote a small article on my professional life which may have led the readers to believe that I was the architect for all buildings within the Holland Christian Homes complex. This is not so. I was the architect for the last building, Providence Tower, only. The other buildings, which were built over a period of time dating back to 1979, were designed by different architects.

The Holland Christian Homes complex has developed as a wonderful Christian community through the vision and efforts of many people, including its board, committees, staff and all those who have supported it through the years. The architect is only a small part of that shared effort.

Roland Jonker
Toronto

Does the church need a political arm?

Once more I wish to voice my serious disagreement with the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. This council acts more and more like a political arm of the CRC in Canada. Since when is the church supposed to have a political arm? Where is the biblical basis for its existence?

Christian political action should come from the people in the pew, when they act their being a Christian in public life. Political action does not belong to the institutional church. If it really does, please make it clear from the Scriptures that this is right. When it concerns education or labor relations or political action, the church as institute should stay away from these.

We seem to have lost our sensitivities in this respect. This is quite evident in Jake Kuiken's letter who asks the question: "Do church principles work for public policies?" Shouldn't this question read "Does the Word of God also apply to public policies?" The obvious answer for a Reformed Christian is, naturally: "Of course, the Word of God counts for all of life!"

But even there we seem to be slipping. Our approaches to modern problems are colored by secularism. The recent communication of the Committee for Contact with the Government showed this clearly.

Syrt Wolters
Victoria, B.C.

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New regulations for activities on Ontario Crown land

TORONTO (MNR) — The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has in place new regulations to guide activities on Crown land and protect public safety and the environment.

The new regulations apply to activities such as mineral exploration, the construction of floating or pole-supported docks and logging activities, such as road building, covered under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA).

"People and organizations will be responsible — as they have always been — for their actions," said Natural Resources Minister Chris Hodgson. "The new regulations give companies, agencies and individuals a clear description of their responsibilities when working on Crown or private land. And the regulations also give MNR a clear mandate to enforce."

Less red tape

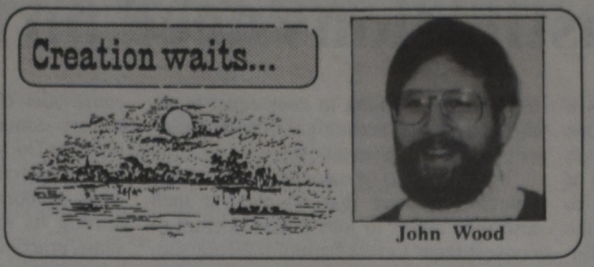
The changes will cut red tape, eliminate duplication areas such as zoning approvals, reduce the number of permits the ministry previously required, and in the process save more than $1 million in unnecessary paperwork and staff time. Before the changes in permitting, MNR processed more than 50,000 individual permits a year. The ministry expects to reduce that total number by 80 per cent.

MNR has already issued new burning guidelines that replace permits for the burning of piles of wood, leaves and grass, or slash and debris from logging, land clearing and mill operations.

The new regulations replace some work permits. MNR used to issue under legislation such as the Public Lands Act and the Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act. People conducting activities on Crown or private land are expected to comply with all other federal and provincial legislation such as the Federal Fisheries Act, the CFSA, the Mining Act, the Endangered Species Act and the Planning Act.

MNR encourages people to contact their nearest district office where a series of fact sheets on the regulations is available. Ministry staff will work with the public to ensure that a clear understanding exists regarding users' responsibilities and MNR's enforcement mandate for ecological sustainability.

MNR still requires permits for many activities on Crown land, including new roads or trails, dredging, aquatic plant control and construction of docks and boathouses.



John Wood

Jack Miner: *The other 'Father Goose'*

"Pride of Autumn" is what Robert Bateman calls his exquisite painting of a Canada goose. These sleek gray beauties are a symbol of the Canadian north. Late in the fall each year they're off, winging south like an early Christmas gift. And this year their graceful transit has been captured in a delightful new film, *Fly Away Home* (see CC, Oct. 25 for a review).

In the fall of 1993, after nearly a decade of trial and error, Ontario sculptor-turned-endangered-species-innovator Bill Lishman did the impossible. He flew with the birds. Not *like* the birds, but *with* them, as one of the flock. This stunning extension of Konrad Lorenz's insight into imprinting won Lisman the moniker "Father Goose." His ultimate goal of reestablishing alternate migratory pathways for whooping cranes remains unfulfilled. But he has forever changed the mental terrain within which conservation biologists operate.

Missionaries of the air

This reminds me of another famous Ontario goose lover — a person who, by his passion for wildlife and personal integrity, transformed our relationship to the natural world. A Minneapolis journalist dubbed Jack Miner the "Father of the conservation movement on the continent."

Back home in Canada this self-taught market-hunter-turned-nature-lover was known as "Wild Goose Jack." But today we might think of him, too, as Father Goose. In 1947 the House of Commons established National Wildlife Week in Canada in his honor. It cited him as "the man who did more than any other to create public interest in the value of Canadian wildlife resources and consideration for their natural habitats."

Miner's famous method was to tag and release thousands of waterfowl, each with a snippet of Scripture and a return address. Over the years these "missionaries of the air," as he called them, carried his vision of conservation and the challenge of the gospel far across North America.

Jack Miner's life was motivated by thanksgiving for the marvels and mysteries of nature. He said, "The more one studies these so-called 'wild' creatures, the closer and closer will they bring him to God who created them all and blessed them and gave man dominion over them." Part of this legacy today is the Jack Miner Migratory Bird Sanctuary near Kingsville, Ont. Open to the public daily except Sunday, year round, it carries on the educational task which Miner loved so much.

Looking for an environmental ethic

Miner was a transitional figure who helped move us out of an era of staggering resource over-consumption. He witnessed the slaughter and "clean-up" of 60 million bison on the prairies, and lived to see the last passenger pigeon from flocks of over a billion individuals. It takes a sturdy ethic to challenge a culture so determined to destroy the fruitfulness of creation. We face a similar challenge today when the common practice around it is set so forcefully against creation.

The Hollywood vision of our relationship to the natural world seldom offers much substance. Flying with the geese may be enormous fun, "a highly addictive pursuit," Lishman calls it. It may help assuage our guilt over the destruction of parts of the planet; or it may even stimulate us to mend tattered relationships. But is this secular view of the human/nature relationship adequate to meet today's environmental challenges?

I don't think so. We are in need of a generation of leaders who love not just the creation, but the Creator also; who recognize that the Baby in the manger is both Savior and Maker of heaven and earth.

There are marvellous unopened gifts still awaiting us in nature, as Lishman and Miner have shown us. I hope we are not so preoccupied with other things that we miss those gifts, or fail to thank the Giver.

John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College, Edmonton.

Alberta's landscapes, wildlife brought to life in the classroom via video

Marian Van Til

CALGARY — The Alberta Education Ministry has announced that it has launched for classroom use three videos that "explore Alberta's ecosystems and the delicate, diverse and complex web of life in these natural environments."

Amoco Canada sponsored the videos and their accompanying teacher resource guides, and is providing 1,900 copies of each to schools in Alberta.

"Alberta's Grassland and Parkland" describes and compares the natural history of the two most populated natural regions in the province. It uses dramatic visual images accompanied by commentary from numerous authorities who discuss how ecosystems develop.

"Wildlife at Risk" highlights five species indelibly changed by loss of habitat and other human impact on the environment: Ord's kangaroo rat (slated as "vulnerable"), the bull trout (threatened), the burrowing owl (endangered), the swift fox (extirpated) and the peregrine falcon (recovering).

"Prairie Wildlife: A Complex Web" demonstrates the interdependency of wildlife on the Prairies by focusing on an animal common there, Richardson's ground squirrel (gopher).

Preparing for environmental careers

These videos continue a series called *Nature's Legacy* which began with last year's "A Southwestern Safari." The series is part of the "Wildlife strand" of the province's Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses, but can also be used in general science studies.

CTS is a new group of junior and senior high school courses designed to prepare Alberta students for both post-secondary programs and the workplace. The Wildlife strand "focuses on developing an awareness of the social and environmental significance of wildlife in Alberta for students preparing careers in that area," says Minister of Education Gary Mar.

Mar asserts that Amoco's sponsorship of the videos "is an outstanding example of how business partnerships contribute to our education system."

ARTS & MEDIA
The Mirror Has Two Faces

This mirror is too cracked for any good use

Marian Van Til

Rated PG. Stars Barbra Streisand, Jeff Bridges, Lauren Hutten, Mimi Rogers, Pierce Brosnan, Brenda Vaccaro. Produced and directed by Barbra Streisand.

This film purports to confront two important societal issues: how sex can ruin a relationship and prevent a couple from really getting to know each other; and how our society's shallow focus on romance and physical attractiveness makes "plain" women less valued than beautiful women.

Barbra Streisand as a bookworm

Jeff Bridges plays Gregory Larkin, a Columbia University math professor who quite literally swoons when a beautiful woman gets within 10 feet of him. For somebody who's supposed to be fairly cerebral, his hormones do more overtime than the burgeoning glands of a 15-year-old. (The university classroom scenes here are so phoney and ridiculous as to be embarassing.)

Needless to say, all the relationships Greg has had have failed. He concludes that it was sex which got in the way (he's right). So he decides he needs a marriage that is strictly platonic, so he can really know a woman and be friends.

It didn't seem to have occured to this guy that he could have gotten to know the women he dated a lot better if he simply quit having sexual relationships with every one of them *before* marriage, and that then perhaps he'd know one of them well enough by the time he married her that a sexual relationship would only enhance, not hinder that knowledge. But of course, that bit of reality would have ruined the plot.

Love follows makeover

Enter Barbra Streisand, looking "average" as Rose Morgan, a literature prof at Columbia. Rose is "always the bridesmaid, never the bride." She has poured herself into her work and spends off hours indulging her love of baseball by watching games on television. She lives with her glamorous, insufferable mother (Lauren Hutten), still plays second fiddle to her beautiful sister (Mimi Rogers) and has a crush on her sister's dashingly handsome fiance (Pierce Brosnan).

Greg and Rose strike up a friendship (how they meet is another story) which deepens as weeks go by. They finally marry, on the understanding that they won't have a sexual relationship. Of course, they fall in love, but Greg is still paranoid that sex will ruin their marriage. When he rejects Rose, she goes back home, and then determines she will become more attractive. She knocks herself out to lose weight; she colors her hair and gets a complete makeover, and the consequent personality change.

A transformed Streisand with Jeff Bridges

What happens? *Voila!*: Greg suddenly realizes he loves her (and so does her brother-in-law, now separated from her sister).

Insidious message

This is an insidious message to send to young women, or women of any age. After decrying shallow relationships, constant marketing through sex, and the fixation with physical attractiveness in our society, Rose, as the movie's voice, declares that all that is ultimately important after all, and the woman had better be glamorous — even though she's smart, funny, compassionate and a dozen other positive things — if she expects to get the guy. Thousands of women still grow up with the pain caused by believing that, and thousands of men are still programmed to believe they "deserve" a physically attractive woman (regardless of their own physical appearance).

Beauty still reigns

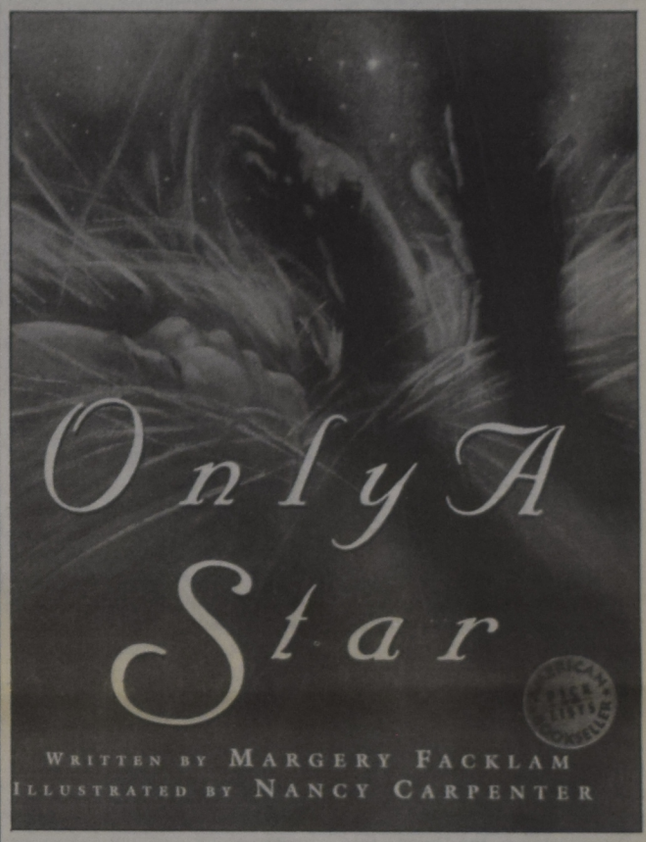
For a while this film seemed to understand the "average woman's" dilemma, but then throws it in the faces of its female viewers. In the end it agrees that some male-approved objective standard of beauty, apart from spirit and personality and deeds is the measure of a woman. The film could have touched many lives for the better if it had gone with its first impulse and allowed Rose to remain the woman she is when we and Greg first meet her.

This film can hardly be seen apart from Barbra Streisand herself. It seems a vanity vehicle for her. She is by all accounts a high-powered, talented and funny woman, and those qualities enhance her physical appearance, as they do any woman's (or man's). Is she, after all her fame and fortune, so insecure about who she is that she still needs public affirmation of her transformation from what she perceived to be ugly duckling to beautiful swan?

If you're looking for a wholesome love story to watch over Christmas vacation, you won't find it in *The Mirror [with] Two Faces.*

Nature 'sings' at Jesus's birth

Marian Van Til



Only a Star

Written by Margery Facklam. Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter.

Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996. ISBN: 0-8028-5122-3. Hardcover, 32 pp. $15 US.

This children's Christmas book has been selected as a Fall 1996 American Booksellers "Pick of the List." Its exquisite illustrations are realistic yet have a wonder-evoking, quieting sense about them; muted browns and dark blues dominate.

The book is intended for four to six year olds. It gives a fanciful answer to a question a young child might ask: Why do we have Christmas decorations?

As the dust jacket says, the story describes "the quiet moments before Jesus' birth, when the light from the Christmas star transformed the smallest creatures and the most ordinary objects in the stable into glorious decorations to welcome the Child." Those creatures include donkeys and doves, and others found in the Holy Land which we don't normally associate with the Nativity: dragonflies, spiders, scarab beetles, jerboas, snails and nightingales.

The animals rejoice at Christ's birth in a barn. These fascinating, God-made creatures praise him — by creeping, crawling, jumping and flying just as he made them to. The book wants young readers to appreciate these unusual creatures even though they aren't furry and cuddly.

All about beetles and jerboas

Following the story itself there are three pages of information about the creatures mentioned, designed for adults to read to kids. An example: "SCARAB BEETLE: All scarab beetles are scavengers that eat dead animals. They are an important part of the world's clean-up crew on every continent except Antarctica. Despite their lowly work, scarab beetles are beautifully colored in shimmery metallic shades of blue, green, pruple, bronze, and gold."

This is a book young children will both learn from and enjoy.

Church

Bio-ethicist says pro-lifers should stress women's safety

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (EP) — The pro-life movement is known for trying to protect unborn children. But if biomedical ethicist Dr. David Reardon has his way, it will also be known for working to protect the other victims of abortion — women.

Reardon, who has a PhD in bioethics, studies post-abortion syndrome and is best known as the author of *Aborted Women: Silent No More*. He believes that a new emphasis on the trauma suffered by women who choose abortion is both morally and strategically right.

Focusing on the mother of an unborn child will increase the effectiveness of pro-life ministries, he says. "No pro-lifer has ever helped a child without helping the mother. Crisis pregnancy centres know this, and focus on helping the mother. Most of the time [the women]want to save their babies."

Feeling cornered

Reardon notes that some 70 per cent of women who have abortions realize it's morally wrong. "But they're pressured. They feel cornered. They need to hear someone say 'I'm going to help you. I know that in your heart you want to take care of this baby.' They need support for their maternal instinct."

Emphasizing the harm that abortion does to women also robs the abortion industry of its reluctant supporters. "People in the mushy middle tolerate abortion because they think that women are being helped," Reardon explains. "As soon as we show that women are not being helped, it changes the equation. People have been able to harden themselves to the baby because they tell themselves the mother is being helped. Or they say, 'My sister had an abortion and my sister is not a bad person.' But if that sister says, 'Abortion is the worst thing I ever did, that's why I was a drunk for years,' or 'That's why I had broken marriages,' then people are not so tolerant of abortion.

"There's a ripple effect; as the woman who has had an abortion is healed she can spread her healing on to friends and relatives, and they're free to recognize the truth that abortion isn't as pretty as they've been told."

Both Reardon's research and his faith have led him to conclude that post-abortion syndrome is very real. "When you transgress God's law you hurt yourself," he says.

"God has shaped women to nurture babies, and when we turn their bodies into violent battlegrounds where we're hurting babies you're going to have problems. Her body is designed to protect the baby, and if you go and force the cervix open you're going to have tearing of the tissue. If you stick instruments in her you're going to introduce bacteria." Reardon cites increased miscarriage rates, increased ectopic pregnancies, difficulties in labor, "all because you're doing something unnatural to the woman's body."

While it might be possible for a careful abortionist to avoid physical damage, psychological and spiritual damage are even more inescapable, says Reardon. "You can rip [her baby] out of her womb, but you can't rip it out of her heart and mind. Women who had abortion are four times more likely to report subsequent substance abuse, and have higher levels of suicide."

Seeking help is difficult

Post-abortive women tend to flee experiences that remind them of their abortion. One woman discovered in post-abortion counselling that the reason she no longer liked Mexican food was because she had eaten at a Mexican restaurant right after having her abortion. Others have panic attacks when they hear the sound of a vacuum cleaner. Many suffer depression on the anniversary of their abortion, or on what would have been their child's birthday.

Women can recover from post-abortion syndrome, but deciding to seek help is difficult. "They're in a bind," explains Reardon. "They're trapped with their sense of grief and loss. The normal grieving process involves sharing their feelings with somebody else. But if you had an abortion and you try to share your pain with somebody, everybody gets uncomfortable. And if they're pro-choice, they're going to be trying to reinforce your denial.

Would you ask a pro-lifer for help?

"If you've had an abortion are you going to turn to somebody who is pro-life? They're afraid of pro-lifers for the most part, because we haven't done a good job of [showing] compassion for those who've had an abortion."

Faith is also essential in the recovery process, says Reardon. "People I've worked with who do recovery counselling say that the religious dimension is critical and essential."

Reardon says research has identified risk factors for post-abortion stress disorder: women in their teens; those who have had multiple abortions; those with prior psychological problems; those who feel pressured into the abortion by others; those who believe abortion is morally wrong; those from conservative or religious backgrounds. "Looking at the list of predictive factors, you realize that most women are at risk."

There's little patient screening for such risk factors. In fact, most people in the abortion industry deny that post-abortion syndrome exists. Reardon wants to change that with laws designed to protect women who choose abortion.

His organization, the Elliot Institute, hopes to see U.S. legislation passed that protects a woman's right to full disclosure of information relevant to her decision to abort, and which guarantees her right to recover damages for any injuries.

"These are very pro-woman laws," Reardon says. "They are not about restricting a woman's right to abortion. They are about guaranteeing that the abortionist is obligated to protect her health and offer the highest standard of care, and if abortion is dangerous for her, to refuse to do it.

"From my perspective that would mean all the time, but ... we don't have to argue about clinics being bad, we just have to say, 'Let's hold all the clinics up to the same high standard of care. If [your abortions are] safe, this legislation won't be a problem for you. The only way you can vote against this law is if you're more interested in protecting the abortion industry's profits than protecting women."

Emphasizing the safety of abortion patients would be a new direction for the pro-life movement, says Reardon. "I get frustrated trying to communicate this to pro-lifers. A lot of pro-lifers have tended to see post-abortion issues as a side issue..., but the welfare of the woman and child are intertwined. You can't rip a baby out of a woman's womb without causing physical, psychological and spiritual injury to her."

Reardon continues, "We've been blocked at every turn from protecting babies. We can't even protect them from having their brains sucked out when they're three-quarters of the way out of the mother's body. Okay — we give up. We can't protect babies. They win. But we're sure going to protect women. And for people who are involved in post-abortion ministries, this has been obvious for a long time. We think this is the way this is going to end."

U.S. town ordered to stop plowing church parking lots

BARRINGTON, R.I. (EP) — Town council members who volunteered to plow snow from church parking lots in the small Rhode Island town of Barrington thought they were just being neighborly. But according to a federal judge, they were violating the U.S. Constitution.

Last winter, six residents of the town of 16,000 complained about the town's practice of plowing the lots of nine churches and a synagogue. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) sued the town to stop the practice.

Judge Joseph DiClerico of New Hampshire sided with the ACLU, ruling that the council was "promoting religion over non-religion," thereby violating the constitutional principle of separation of church and state. The case was tried by a New Hampshire judge after Rhode Island's federal judges excused themselves from the suit, noting that the town council president works at the courthouse.

DiClerico ruled that the town plowing policy gave religious institutions a benefit not afforded other private property owners. The council has not decided whether it will appeal the ruling, but residents of the town have begun an aluminum drive to raise money to pay for the plowing this winter.

Sacraments and clergy go together: Dutch churches

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — In both rural and central urban areas in the Netherlands, congregations are becoming smaller. As they decline, many find they can no longer support a pastor, so they hire (at a lower salary) pastoral workers who have studied theology but haven't followed the formal university course to ordination.

Such workers preach and provide pastoral care but cannot administer the sacraments, preside over profession of faith and weddings, or lead admonition and discipline procedures. Their churches have asked their synods: if a pastoral worker can lead a church in most ways, why can he or she not also administer sacraments? Or perhaps become an ordained elder and be given that right.

A committee to study this issue was appointed by the three denominations in the unity process "Together on the Way." In October a report called "Office and Sacrament" was presented to a trio-synod of the two Reformed churches and the Lutheran church involved.

The fundamental questions at stake were recognized but the consequences of changing the rules need more thought, said the report. One clear recommendation came through: that persons with only a high school theology training should not be ordained. That would lead to different classes of ministers.

In the short run, the committee proposed the use of part-time ministers, and "tent-makers." It also suggested combining congregations where possible.

The day before the synod met, an article in the Dutch newspaper *Trouw* suggested the committee merely protected its own positions, the members' own status as ministers. The synod itself was not satisfied with the report. The dilemma of the needs of smaller churches and the need to preserve the character of the offices was not resolved. So the issue will be studied further, this time, with pastoral workers included in the membership of the committee.

Familiarity can cause Christians to miss Christmas, says Christian songwriter

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (EP) — "The problem with Christmas," says Michael Card, "is that it's all so familiar."

Finding ways to make the Christmas story new led to Card's successful album and book *The Promise*, which in turn has been the focus of Christmas concerts each year since the album's 1991 release. It has also led to some unusual Card family traditions, including an annual trek to a barn for a reading of the Christmas story.

"We always go into a barn, a real barn, that still has animals and smells and we get the kids together and read the Christmas story," explains the Dove Award-winning singer/songwriter. "I think it's great to help kids try to recapture what a scandalous thing it was for the Savior of the world to be born in a barn."

Going to a barn is just one way Christians can make the Christmas story new, says Card. "The best way for Christians to become new is for one to interact with his or her own imagination," he explains. "For example, a person can go to any maternity ward and see what the birth of a baby is really like. Then they can go to a barn and imagine a baby being born there. They can go look at homeless people and see people that don't have any place to lay their heads. That's the kind of information one needs to understand Christmas — not manger scenes or Christmas carols."

Hinges on understanding the gospel

The Christmas story is important, says Card, because the Christian faith began in that manger in Bethlehem. "Understanding the birth of Jesus — whether you get it right or not — has almost everything to do with the way you understand the rest of the gospel. You either have a nationalized, commercialized view of the gospel, which is false, or you look at it biblically and truthfully and you understand that it was a scandal for Jesus to be born the way he was, and that it was costly. It was a great cost to him, second only to the death on the cross.

"We're not very good at reaching out and participating in other cultures. Something I call the 'warm fuzzy effect' leads to a misunderstanding of Christmas. It doesn't take a scholar to look at the Nativity texts and see that it was very much a moment of desperation — a woman about to have a baby, no place but a barn available. Our whole 'silent night, holy night' mentality makes us forget that for Joseph, and especially for Mary, it was a desperate time."

"Hand in hand with that is the notion of poverty — the fact that not only was Jesus born into a very desperate situation but also a very impoverished situation. That was appropriate because so much of his ministry was with the poor — his birth was a radical identification with the poor."

The desperate circumstances surrounding the birth of Christ give us a point of contact with the life of Jesus, says Card. "How is it that I can relate to this man whom I believe is the Son of God? All of us 'labor and are heavily laden' — and that's a point of view that allows us to relate to him more closely."

Dreams too tame

Jesus being born in a barn to an unwed mother was a counter-cultural start to what would be a counter-cultural life, notes Card. "It doesn't take a great genius to look at Scripture and see that everybody who ever got close to Jesus was offended by him at some point. He was a scandalous person and he failed to meet people's expectations — not because there was anything wrong with him, but because there was something wrong with their expectations."

There's still something wrong with our expectations, says Card — they don't go far enough. The opening song of his Christmas album, *The Promise*, includes the line, "The Promise showed their wildest dreams had simply not been wild enough." Card explains, "Our warm fuzzy picture of the Incarnation is not even close to being wild enough or significant enough. The Jesus that the gospel presents is much more a person we can relate to than we could ever imagine."

Card's hope for his annual Christmas concerts is that it helps put people in the mood for a significant Christmas. "I just hope it attunes people for Christmas," he concludes. "One of the worst things I can imagine happening is missing Christmas — and I know it's bad because it's happened to me. You come to the end of it all and realize, 'I've missed it again. I've missed participating in the awe and the wonder. I've gotten presents and had a big Christmas dinner and spent time with everybody except for the one Person that Christmas is about."

Russian churches form 'Interconfessional Committee'

MINSK, Russia (REC) — At a meeting in Minsk, Russia, 21 churches agreed to form an "interconfessional consultative committee." It will promote cooperation among all mainline Christian churches, including the Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholics and Baptists. Even representatives of the Greek Catholic Church who have been in dispute with the Orthodox churches for several years, attended.

There were some hopes of forming a council of churches, but the churches were not yet prepared for that step.

Among issues discussed was the difficult problem of proselytism. In particular, the Russian Orthodox Church has felt threatened by the many foreign, Protestant missionaries. A final statement did not use the word *proselytism*, but declared conversion to another church "inadmissible" when done "through ways and means contradicting the spirit of Christian love and violating the freedom of a human person."

The churches also affirmed their commitment to play a peacemaking role in the political process. There were many opinions about church-state relations, but all agreed that non-interference in internal affairs was an important principle.

German synod will urge ordaining Latvian women

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — The North Elbian Evangelical Lutheran Church has taken a strong stand in favor of ordaining women in its partner church in Latvia. Although women's ordination is technically permitted in the Lutheran Church in Latvia, Bishop James Vanags suspended such ordinations since 1993 to give the church time to discuss the issue.

Now, North Elbian, a regional synod in Germany, has said the issue is one of basic technology. The exclusion of women is "a humiliation of women and incompatible with the fact that men and women are made in the image of God," the synod stated.

The synod noted that six Latvian women have gone abroad to be ordained and now serve a Latvian church in exile. The synod further urged that the German church leadership raise the matter within the Lutheran World Federation. It said ordaining women should become a confessional issue.

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Feature

A chronology of disaster in central Africa

Cycles of suffering and death have come to define Rwanda and Burundi

Tim Lind

AKRON, Pa. (MCC) — Once again, crisis in Africa's "Great Lakes" region has caught the world's attention. Since mid-October Rwandan and Burundian refugees in eastern Zaire have fled their camps and are looking for safety wherever they can find it. About one million refugees and displaced Zairians are now on the move.

The causes of this most recent crisis are complex, and are entwined in the region's history. Inter-ethnic conflict, high population density, the migration of people across national boundaries, and colonial social policy are all important factors. But short of a lengthy investigation of the past, it is essential to understand events in the region since early 1994.

Hutu genocide against Tutsis

In April 1994, extremist members of Rwanda's majority Hutu social/ethnic group in Rwanda organized and began to carry out a genocide against the minority Tutsi. The killing was carried out by the Rwandan Armed Forces, various extremist militia and the many peasant Hutu they incited, encouraged and sometimes even forced to participate. Over two and a half months, about 800,000 Tutsi were killed — about 10 per cent of Rwanda's population.

Jeanne and her husband, Alfred, were at their little mud and wattle home with their two daughters when they heard gunshots. Their two sons were at school. As the violence came nearer, Jeanne hid in the bush with Juliette, 16. Alfred wanted to stay home to protect the property, and Speciose, 18, insisted on staying with her dad.

Jeanne and Juliette watched, horrified, as Alfred and Speciose were brutally massacred by Hutu military with machetes, and their little house was set on fire. The two fled, agonizing over the two sons left behind. They walked to Burundi where Jeanne gave birth to another child. After some months, Jeanne took Juliette and the baby to Kenya, where she miraculously found her two sons.

When Jeanne's money began to run out, she sought help from the United Nations and the family was flown to a refugee camp on the Kenya/Sudan border. There, the baby became so ill that refugee medical staff recommended Jeanne return to Kenya for medical care.

While Jeanne was away, Juliette was raped in the camp. When Jeanne returned, Juliette did not tell her what had happened. The family was eventually accepted for immigration to the United States. During the required medical tests Juliette learned she had HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, due to the rape. She was no longer eligible to go to the States. Jeanne faced a hard decision: "Should I stay with my daughter in Nairobi, Kenya, as an illegal resident, risking being deported back to Rwanda? Or should I take my three youngest children to America where I can begin a more scure life for them?"

Millions ripped from home

As the 1994 genocide started, the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a Tutsi-dominated rebel group based in Uganda, moved into Rwanda. Over the next several months the Rwandan Patriotic Front took control of most of the country. About 300,000 Hutu fled to Tanzania in April/May, and another two million left for Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi in July/August. Another 1.5 million were internally displaced within Rwanda.

While media depicted the exodus of about 1.2 million Hutu people from Rwanda into eastern Zaire as a chaotic flight from the pursuing army, the migration was actually orchestrated by the Hutu extremists who had just carried out the genocide. Included among the refugees were the militant militia, Hutu political leaders and much of the Rwandan army. Once again they incited, encouraged and forced peasants to leave their homes. This amounted to a strategic retreat by Hutu militants, with much of the population taken as hostage.

When the soldiers arrived at our compound, everyone was screaming and fleeing for their lives. I had two sons with me and I didn't know where my wife and the other seven children had run to. We followed the crowd with the few things we carried. After two days we arrived at Goma, Zaire, and set up a plastic shelter.

For days we milled around, stunned. One day across the crowded camp I spotted a woman who looked like my wife. I couldn't believe my eyes. As I ran toward her she recognized me. I cried with joy as I learned my entire family had made it to Goma alive. When I heard that wonderful news, I praised God and promised to spend the rest of my life telling people what God had done for my family.

Chaos in the camps

In August 1994, the massive numbers of people, and the outbreak of cholera which took the lives of some 30,000 refugees, created a high level of chaos in the refugee camps. Later that same month more than 100,000 refugees returned to Rwanda. Since that time, however, few have returned. Hutu militants and former Rwandan military personnel took control of the camps and prevented people from leaving through constant propaganda about conditions in Rwanda and through threats.

Early in 1996 sporadic fighting began in eastern Zaire. Exactly which parties initiated this conflict, and why, is uncertain. It is clear that Zairian Tutsi, the Zairian military and refugee-camp-based Rwandan Hutu were involved, and that Zairians of various ethnic groups were victims.

Zairian officials have accused the Rwandan and Burundian armies, both dominated by Tutsi, of involvement. In August and September the fighting spread, and by the end of October, some 1.5 million people were trapped in a war zone.

If is difficult to foresee any quick resolution to this regional conflict. Once again we focus on the desparate plight of hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons in eastern Zaire. We must address this tragedy in the short term to avoid complete catastrophe.

No repentance, no resolution

But the most fundamental issue remains the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Rwandans, Hutu and Tutsi alike, must come to terms with the enormity of that event. Until then, none of the related problems — refugees, armed conflict and general instability and insecurity in the region — can be seriously addressed. Currently 85,000 people are in detention or prison in Rwanda, most suspected of participating in the genocide. The majority of the genocide ringleaders and organizers are still free, many sheltered by neighboring African and some European governments. The process of bringing these people to justice has been inexorably slow, partly because the entire Rwandan justice system was decimated by the 1994 war and genocide, partly because of the enormity of the task.

Dealing with the evil of genocide offers the only hope for finding a way out of the cycles of suffering and death that have defined this region in the eyes of the world.

Tim Lind, a long-time Mennonite Central Committee Africa worker, was part of MCC's assessment team that visited Goma and Bukavu, Zaire, in the summer of 1994. Lind helped shape MCC response to the crisis. This fall he returned to the region for three weeks, again as a program advisor. He normally lives in Three Rivers, Michigan.

Feature

Seeking reconciliation from death row

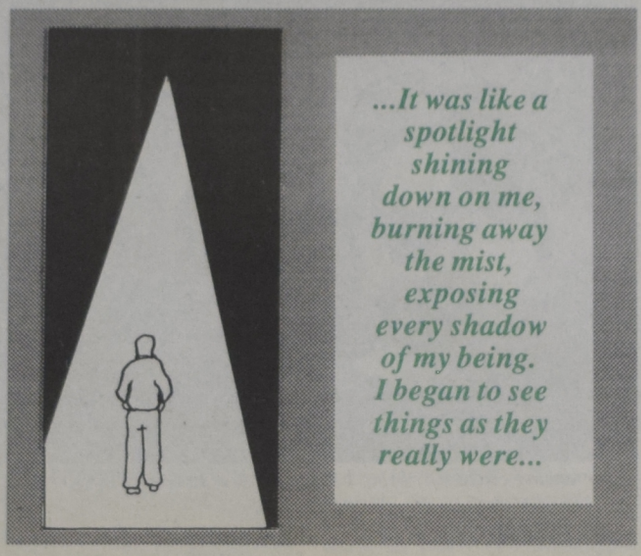
Michael B. Ross

My name is Michael Ross. I am a condemned man on Connecticut's death row. When most people think of death row inmates, I'm the one that they think of. I'm the worst of the worst, a man who has raped and murdered eight women, assaulted several others, and stalked and frightened many more. And when I am finally executed, the vast majority of the people of this state will celebrate my death. Sometimes, when I close my eyes I can see the hundreds of people who will gather outside the prison gates on the night of my execution. I can see them waving placards, drinking and rejoicing, and I can hear their cheers as my death is officially announced.

I have lived here on Connecticut's death row for eight and a half years now. I live in an eight-by-ten foot unpainted concrete cell for 23 hours a day — 24 hours a day on weekends. I come out for an hour of "recreation" five days a week. Other than that, the only other times that I come out is for a 15-minute shower five days a week, and for the occasional visit [one half hour, through glass, on a telephone]. I eat all of my meals in my cell, brought to me in a styrofoam box three times a day. I live in a single cell, so I live alone — and since I can talk only to the two people on either side of my cell I quite often feel alone.

One of the results of this almost total isolation is that, after a while, a person is forced to look at himself. I'm not talking about the cursory, superficial manner in which most people look at themselves, but rather a quite painful, unrelenting search of one's very soul.

Many inmates in prison, and many of those on death row, are able to lie convincingly to themselves, to see themselves as basically good people who are the innocent victims of a corrupt judicial system or of an unfair and uncaring society in general. Sometimes it is very difficult to honestly see ourselves as we truly are, and much easier to blame others as justification for our actions. I know this to be true because for years this is exactly what I did. During this period I was angry, so very angry at everyone and everything except for the one person I should have been angry with — myself. It took a very long time, years, in fact, for that anger to subside and for me to begin to accept who I was and what I had become; and even longer before I was ready and willing to accept responsibility for my actions.



...It was like a spotlight shining down on me, burning away the mist, exposing every shadow of my being. I began to see things as they really were...

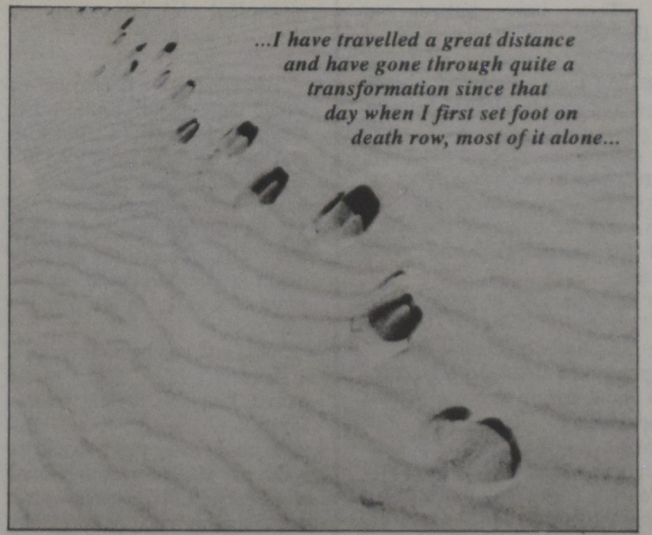
Two things primarily led to this transformation. Much of the credit for the first goes to a psychiatrist from the Sexual Disorders Clinic at the John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. Dr. Fred Berlin diagnosed me as suffering from a paraphiliac mental disorder and was indispensable in my fight to get the Department of Correction to acknowledge my disorder and to treat it with the medication that I now receive. The drug, Depo-Lupron, clears my head of the vile and noxious thoughts of rape and murder that plagued my mind for so long, and the drug eliminates the previously uncontrollable urges that drove me to commit the crimes that put me here on death row. That monster still lives in my head, but the medication has chained him and has banished him to the back of my mind. And while he is still able to mock me, he can no longer control me. I control him; I am human once again.

I can hardly describe what a milestone this was in my life. Try to imagine a time that a melody or some catchy tune got stuck in your head, playing over and over and over again, driving you crazy. The harder you try to push that tune out of your mind, the louder and more persistent it becomes. Now try to imagine that instead of a harmless but annoying tune, you experience filthy and despicable urges, desires and fantasies of the degradation, rape and murder of innocent women. Day in day out. They fill your thoughts and fantasies when you are awake. They are in your dreams when you sleep. Imagine trying to control the urges, day by day, hour by hour. And try to imagine the self-hatred, loathing and abhorrence that you develop toward yourself when you fail. If you can imagine this then you will have only begun to understand what I have experienced, what I had become. And only then will you begin to understand the true blessing that this medication was to me.

But the medication was only part of the story of my personal transformation. It gave me back my mind, a clear mind free of the malevolent thoughts and urges. And it allowed my humanity to awaken, giving me back something that I thought I had lost forever. But this was just the first step, and perhaps the easiest, for I didn't have to do anything — the medication did it for me. Now began the more difficult part of my transformation, an examination of myself, a very profound, very painful, and ongoing examination.

Once my mind was clear, for the first time I began to see — *really see*. It was like a spotlight shining down on me, burning away the mist, exposing every shadow of my being. I began to see things as they really were. I began to see things I didn't like. And many of the things that I saw brought me great anguish.

I saw how weak and afraid I really was. I had always thought that I was strong and confident. I saw how I had allowed the monster in my mind to take control of me. I saw what I had become. And worst of all, for the first time, I saw the pain that I had brought to so many — such great and unceasing pain.



...I have travelled a great distance and have gone through quite a transformation since that day when I first set foot on death row, most of it alone...

After my eyes were finally opened I began to feel things — unpleasant, disturbing feelings. I began to feel the terrible agony and distress that I had brought to so many: my victims, the families and friends of my victims, my own family. And I also began to feel the awesome weight of my responsibility for my actions and of my responsibility to the people that I have harmed. And finally, I felt a profound sense of guilt. An intense, overwhelming and pervasive guilt that surrounds my very soul with dark, tormented clouds filled with a mixture of self-hatred, remorse, regrets and sorrow. All of which leaves me with a deep desire to make amends and achieve reconciliation, something which under the circumstances seems all but impossible.

Yet it is this sense of reconciliation that I yearn for the most. Reconciliation with the spirit of my victims. Reconciliation with the families and friends of my victims. And finally, reconciliation with myself and my God. This will be the final part of my transformation, and undoubtedly the most difficult part.

I am fortunate to have a good friend and guide for this part of my journey. A true man of God, Rev. John Gilmartin, who makes a six-hour round-trip drive to see me once a month. I have travelled a great distance and have gone through quite a transformation since that day when I first set foot on death row, most of it alone. And I am grateful and thankful to the divine providence that sent me Rev. Gilmartin. With God's help, and his, I will achieve that reconciliation that I so desire, and, I hope, complete my transformation into one who is worthy of redemption and forgiveness. My journey is still far from over, but at least now I can see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel — and what a glorious light it is! May God give me the strength, perseverance and moral fortitude to complete my journey and become one with that Light before my eventual execution.

Author's note: There are several groups who firmly believe in victim-offender reconciliation, and of the offender's reconciliation with society. They actively promote reformation and reconciliation over the more politically popular concept of retribution through execution.

For more information on one such group contact Pat Bane, Director; Murder Victims' Families For Reconciliation; P.O. Box #208, Atlantic, VA 23303-0208. Or call her at (801) 824-0948. And please tell her you heard about the group from Michael Ross.

Michael B. Ross is inmate #127404 on death row at the Connecticut State Penitentiary, Somers, Conn.

On shooting our wounded generals

John A. Tamming

It is a terrible thing to witness a former minister, a herald of the Word, humiliated, humbled out of office and out of a career.

I can on first blush count eight generals I have personally known who have fallen, two of whom were my pastors. I am sure you have known some too.

Without exception, they suffered from what our churches delicately describe as a moral failing. And they got caught.

One now manages an apartment complex; another hit me up for life insurance during seminary; one landed on his feet in the chaplaincy. Another was rumored to be on general welfare assistance. He is single and I know that the going rate in Ontario for single men is less than $600 per month. Not one has remained in the ministry.

We tell 54-year-old men who have been trained for one task and one task only, who cannot easily translate the preaching of the Gospel into marketable skills, that their usefulness is over and we quickly convene a calling committee to bring in a replacement.

If he's fortunate, the pastor moves away. At least such is the secret hope of many. The more generous churches offer six to 12 months severance; others pay for one half of the move, and that's it.

Do we owe such persons more? The pantheon of North American victimhood does not need any additions, and I am not suggesting that defrocked clerics need to be perceived as anything of the sort. Nor am I minimizing the effects that an abuse of trust can have on a woman.

Maybe we could view the issue in terms of covenant instead.

We take these persons as 25-year-olds and use their services for 30 or more years. Most are conscientious and for years perform their services admirably; many are known for being sensitive and so forth. In their careers they have blessed hundreds. No exaggeration. They have buried our grandmothers and presided at the weddings of our children. They have been there when our sons discovered pot, when our daughters conceived out of wedlock. They asked after church how the job-hunt was going and told the deacons to keep an eye on our needs.

Then they slip. Because the calling can involve extended, unsupervised hours, and frequent visits to the lonely, they are exposed to opportunities many others do not experience. As well, it is almost trite to observe that the exposure the office brings is a breeding ground for insecurities, and many parishioners do little to remedy this.

At a minimum we can assist these persons in getting back on their feet.

Getting back to the covenant idea, how about this. What of our responsibility for setting up isolated ministers who have little real human contact? What about failing to have systems in place to ensure a pastoral support team?

Let's pursue this covenant theme just one more step. Certain Canadians qualify for a temporary or permanent disability payment through the Canada Pension Plan. Why not create a similar temporary supplement for those who fall through the CRC Ministers Pension Fund? Call it a retraining supplement if you must (the "Lapsarian Fund" comes to mind).

Other than a modest increase in premiums, what's the possible downside? That the program is an incentive to fall? If you believe that, it's too bad that you did not meet the minister on welfare. His eyes haunt me still. His fingernails were gnawed, his eyes hollow and darting.

I don't care who he slept with or when. I think we owed him more.

John Tamming is a barrister and solicitor living in Owen Sound, Ont.

'Sentencing circle' an effective means to restore justice

ROBERT VANDERVENNEN

A sentencing circle may bring better justice than does jailing.

Robert VanderVennen

In our Nov. 22 issue Alan Doerksen reported on "Restorative Justice Week," a program devised by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections to make ordinary citizens more aware of prisoners, their victims and the struggles of both. One method of restorative justice mentioned was the "sentencing circle." The story below follows up on that idea, describing how the circle works.

TORONTO — A 26-year-old single male pleads guilty to two charges of theft, of "breaking and entering." He has a long history of thefts, has served a year in jail, is now on probation and has an alcohol and drug problem. The prosecutor says he ought to be sentenced to two years less a day in the penitentiary.

What else can be done?

Another jail term would punish him and protect society from him for two years. But what about after that? Would he walk the streets a better man? Not likely. "Correctional institutions" are not good at correcting criminals. The man's problem is that he has not been able to take responsibility for his actions.

An alternative, a "sentencing circle," comes from the experience of aboriginal people. Members of The Church Council on Justice and Corrections demonstrated this approach by holding a mock sentencing circle at the Church of the Holy Trinity next door to Toronto's Eaton Centre during Restorative Justice Week. About 50 people observed.

Real community needed

In order for a sentencing circle to work, the criminal needs to want help and there needs to be a community of people, including those offended by the criminal, who are willing to try to help.

Those willing to consider helping this young man included one of the robbery victims and her husband, the police officer who investigated the crimes, the probation officer, the man's mother, grandfather and girlfriend, his former employer, the prosecuting and defence attorneys and a law professor who acted as judge.

All of them, including the criminal, sat in a circle, symbolizing that all sat there in an equal position. Those in the circle had the opportunity to speak twice, giving everyone, including the criminal, a chance to be heard. A speaker could not be interrupted, and no abusive statements were permitted, but people were allowed to express their anger, fear and pain.

The first time around the circle people needed to describe what happened and how they felt about it. The second time they needed to say what they thought should be done.

At the end, the judge said he was willing to wait four months to sentence the man, to see if he could start turning his life around.

The circle can be a wrenching experience. This offender was deeply ashamed to face the people he violated and to hear in public how his family has been disappointed by him. Yet they wanted to help him take responsibility for his life, to join a 12-step group and do volunteer work for those he has hurt.

Repentance needed too

The circle can only work if the offender says he's sorry and if he truly seems to want to be responsible for his deeds. If so, the community around him needs to be willing to help him. If those conditions exist, the sentence must be arrived at with the consent of all: the victim, families, offender, lawyers, probation officer and judge.

This sounds idealistic, and it doesn't always work. But normal imprisonment is seldom "restorative."

The circle-sentencing concept comes from the experience of aboriginals in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The police officer in this mock circle was a Native Canadian constable in Toronto who has experience in aboriginal sentencing circles.

The aboriginal groups who use this method have realized that the community needs to share responsibility for crime and needs to help with the solution — resolution that deals with causes is better than punishment alone.

As the offender's former employer said during the circle sentencing, "You need a kick in the pants, but jail is not the right kick."

Society

Who knows but that I was called to the bar for such a time as this?

Robert G. Kuhn

On June 29, 1996, the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT), by a vote of 17 to 1, denied Trinity Western University's application to provide the final year of its teacher education program because of the University's supposedly "discriminatory practices which are contrary to the public interest and public policy."

COURTESY ROBERT G. KUHN

While TWU's existing education programs are not in jeopardy (education students obtain the final year of teacher qualifications through association with Simon Fraser University), the BCCT decision is startling and somewhat ominous. It concludes that the biblical distinctives for which TWU stands, as set out in the "Community Standards" governing all faculty and students, are wrongfully "discriminatory." Specifically, representatives of the BCCT stated that, despite any exception enjoyed by TWU, the failure to acknowledge sexual preference rights (as legislated by 1992 amendments to the Human Rights Act of British Columbia) for its students and faculty is contrary to the public interest, and leads to "intolerance" on the part of its students.

A mere icon

The BCCT decision is not only a threat to Trinity Western's unique place in the pluralism of the other universities, but a direct attack on the relevance of the evangelical Christian community in Canada. To use the computer analogy, with one punch of the button the "application" of Christian principles, upon which the development of Western history is largely based, has been "minimized" to an icon in the lower left hand corner of the screen. Will Christians with their Bible-based views be marginalized by the laws and lawmakers of this country? Will biblical truth be scorned, even criminalized, and held to be "contrary to the public interest," an enemy of the public good? What will be our answer?

Now this is truly a challenge!

So when called by President Snider to discuss the potential of legal recourse, I found myself driven to respond. As a product of this "discriminatory" institution I was astonished at how a tribunal could attack the credibility of the University without so much as a thimbleful of evidence. If anything, TWU taught me grace and forgiveness, not intolerance.

I saw acceptance in the eyes of its professors. I felt compassion and concern in the words of then president Calvin Hanson, as he assured us that "If Christ is Lord, nothing is secular." I knew love and endless patience from fellow students who came from seemingly every corner and circumstance in North America and beyond.

God's finger

How could this experience that was such a positive influence on me be trampled on by those who apparently find it troubling and to be feared.

Perhaps this was one of those challenges for which I was called into the legal profession. I have been awed by how God has moved in my life and that of my wife and family. It never seemed to be in straight lines, but the tracing of his finger was always clear, at least in retrospect. And it seemed more than coincidence that, after 15 years working in large downtown law firms, I moved my primary office to the Fraser Valley and joined a smaller, but well-respected firm; that Renae and I, and our three children, now live only about a mile from Trinity Western; that I hired an associate from my previous Vancouver firm, who is also currently a professor at Trinity Western; that my primary assistant had worked at Trinity Western until coming to work with me.

All this, and the strange way in which my legal career had brought me in contact with a wide variety of complex and high profile cases, seemed to dictate that, although I had never represented my alma mater before, this was my time to give back to TWU. It was impossible not to respond with my heart and my training to a need which seemed to be threatening the very existence of the extraordinary community which was such a priceless part of my past.

It's about room for Christians

Although no decision has been made at the date of this article, all avenues of defence are being considered by a team of individuals chosen to elect the best course of action. A distinct possibility is a legal action against the BCCT, seeking to overturn its decision. Inevitably, any case would be strongly opposed by the BCCT and, perhaps, others who are against any influence by Christians in our schools or any public arena. If the legal route were chosen, strong arguments can be made that it was BCCT that was discriminatory when it relegated the religious freedom of Trinity Western's faculty and students to a subservient role behind the freedom of sexual preference.

This is not a fight between the homosexual community and TWU. Some alumni who have chosen a homosexual lifestyle still support the university with its biblically-founded distinctives. But there is a conflict in who will define the role that Christians may have in public education. In fact, it can be argued that it was the BCCT that expressed intolerance in refusing to recognize TWU's right to fully participate in the educational community.

It is a complex pluralistic society in which we live, requiring a careful balancing of rights and responsibilities. Likewise, there is a complex legal environment in which the University and perhaps all Christians, must chart the best course. The Charter, human rights, religious freedoms, natural justice and procedural fairness are all involved in the analysis. Perhaps, in some way this challenge is representative of one that faces all of us who seek to follow Christ.

Robert Kuhn is a partner in the law firm of Baker Newby and practises in their Vancouver and Abbotsford offices. He and his family attend Northview Community Church in Abbotsford, B.C. The article is reprinted with permission from Roots, *TWU's alumni newsletter.*

Creed

(A satirical poem on the modern mind)

In the preceding article, Kuhn asks, "Will Christians with their Bible-based views be marginalized by the laws and lawmakers of this country? Will biblical truth be scorned, even criminalized, and held to be 'contrary to the public interest,' an enemy of the public good? What will be our answer?"

Kuhn's question points to the upside down nature of so much of post-modern society. An English journalist, Steve Turner, hinted at this in a poem called "Creed." The poem pokes fun at this society by stating in the form of a confession what this society really believes. It's a belief that stands in direct opposition to what the Christian believes.

We believe in Marxfreudanddarwin.
We believe everything is OK
as long as you don't hurt anyone,
to the best of your definition of hurt,
and to the best of your knowledge.

We believe in sex before, during and after marriage.
We believe in the therapy of sin.
We believe that adultery is fun.
We believe that sodomy's OK.
We believe that taboos are taboo.

We believe that everything's getting better
despite evidence to the contrary.
The evidence must be investigated
And you can prove anything with evidence.

We believe there's something in horoscopes,
UFO's and bent spoons;
Jesus was a good man just like Buddha,
Mohammed and ourselves.
He was a good moral teacher although we think
His good morals were bad.

We believe that all religions are basically the same —
at least the one that we read about is.
They all believe in love and goodness.
They only differ on matters of creation,
sin, heaven, hell, God and salvation.

Steve Turner
English journalist
From *Can Man Live Without God* by Ravi Zacharias

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Advice

Saturday afternoon snapshot

Nick Sumlak

"Grandma, can I marry you?"

"Don't you think I'm a little too tall for you?"

"I'm gonna grow."

"And you're going to be very handsome and find someone who's going to love you like I do."

"Will they dance like you?"

With her hands covered in flour she reached down and picked me up.

Grandma danced with me most times when she heard songs she liked on the radio, and she smoothed my hair as she moved around the kitchen in slow, careful steps.

"Why are you crying?" I asked.

"'Cause I'm happy."

"I don't cry when I'm happy."

"When you get older you'll have nice things to remember and it'll make you happy."

Then she kissed me.

"You've got a white nose," she said, chaulking me up with flour. "And white hair. I think it makes you look a little older."

We had a lot to laugh about, powdering each other up.

"I think we'd better save some for the baking."

"Is that your favorite song?" I asked.

"Do you like it?"

"Yes, and I like the smell too."

It was vanilla extract, Grandma explained. The last time we were in the kitchen baking I heard the same song, and I liked it and I liked the smell too.

And when I looked at my Grandma, behind her glasses dusted with flour, I just knew I was handsome, because nobody who was that beautiful could love somebody who wasn't.

And it made me happy. And I laughed.

Nick Sumlak lives in Etobicoke, Ont.

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Peter and Marja

are IN

Sunday sports: right or wrong?

Dear P & M:

We have something on our hearts. Lately* Christian Courier *and* The Banner *(the weekly periodical of the Christian Reformed Church) have focused some of their attention on sports. In a recent CC some parents asked about the politics behind it all. I don't know anything about that, but I think we should be asking ourselves what the Lord has to say about competitive sports on Sunday. The Bible tells us to keep the Sabbath day holy and to live in this world without becoming part of this world. So let's witness by not taking part in Sunday sports.

Sports are fine, even healthy, but they're not the most important thing in our lives. A few years ago* The Banner *published an article about a good hockey player who did not take part in Sunday sports. We're sure that the Lord will reward him for making that decision. By his choice he followed Jesus' command to be salt of the earth and a light to the world (Matt. 5:13-16).

Dear Sunday Sports:

On the one hand, we share your concern. We see parents running around on Sundays, bringing their kids to various sporting events. The better athletes soon find themselves on elite teams and the next thing you know they, and often their parents, are traveling and playing on weekends, including Sundays. We recognize that this has a very negative impact on Sunday worship and we applaud those parents who resist this pressure. And pressure it certainly is! We affirm the creational norm of a day set aside weekly for rest and worship.

On the other hand, we recognize that there are many professional Christian athletes in all sports. They are often a tremendous witness to their teammates, as well as powerful role models for young people. When such athletes speak at schools they make a tremendous impression. It's not unusual for such athletes to hold Bible studies on the road, attend church in the cities where they play, and lead prayers in the locker room. These Christian athletes are persons who somehow had to balance worship and playing opportunities throughout their development as sports figures.

On an amateur level, many Christians are also involved in sports on occasional Sundays, but they don't need to ignore worship. At this summer's Olympics a large contingent of chaplains was present and many worship opportunities were provided for the participants. And before every New York City Marathon the runners are invited to an ecumenical worship service.

It would be easy for us to simply say that sports on Sunday is bad, period. But then we have to be consistent and also refuse to watch any sports event on TV on Sunday, including the closing ceremony of the Olympics. Communally, we may also have to think more seriously about what we should say to young people who aspire to a variety of other "non-essential" occupations that would require them to work on Sundays (e.g., chef, actor, musician, hotel manager, etc.).

The New Testament eases the Sabbath legislation of the Old Testament. We all know how Jesus fought the legalism of the Sabbath. What we may not remember as well are the things Paul wrote specifically about the Sabbath. He said: "One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind" (Romans 14:5).

In Hebrews 4 the author takes the idea of Sabbath and applies it to rest from sin and from suffering: "There remains, then, a sabbath-rest for the people of God." Finally, let's remember that New Testament Christians did not have a day off. A Sunday set aside for worship and rest was not introduced until the fourth century.

Should Sunday be special, different, unique in its focus on rest and worship? Absolutely. Children and teens need to sense from their parent's decisions that church attendance can never be jeopardized or replaced by involvement in sports. But where that priority is honored, we're not prepared to say unequivocally that Christians, sports and Sundays can never mix. As an example we can think of some parents who allow a Sunday morning practice or game as long as the family can make it to church on time.

We deeply respect anyone who chooses to forego a certain activity or occupation on the basis of Sunday observance. But we also have a great respect for those who bear witness to Christ in areas, including sports, where most of us have very little influence as light and salt.

The Christian who enters the professional world of sports needs our prayers and love in order to keep the faith and be a witness. We need to avoid making the judgment that such a person has caved in or drifted away. Instead, let's encourage him or her with our interest and support.

The times have sure changed, haven't they? Let's admit it: most of us at one time or another have tuned in to watch part of the winter or summer Olympics on a Sunday. That should caution us against pointing a finger at anyone else who participates.

Write to: P & M, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5V6.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

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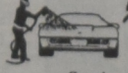

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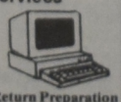

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(Revised February 1, 1995)

Births	$25.00
Marriages & Engagements	$40.00
Anniversaries	$45.00
2-column anniversaries	$90.00
Obituaries	$45.00
Notes of thanks	$35.00
Birthdays	$40.00

All other one-column classified advertisements: $15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $15.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge.

Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

ATTENTION!

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.,

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. *Christian Courier* reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a one-year subscription for only $25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $25.00 and the couple's correct address.

Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905) 682-8311
Fax: (905) 682-8313

ATTENTION!

If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:

- send printed or typed copy
- include billing address
- include contact person with phonenumber.

Thank You.

Christmas Greetings

PASMA:
To all my friends and relatives
Happy Holidays and a Blessed 1997!
Mrs. Alice Pasma
R.R. #1, Springfield, ON
N0L 2J0

Births

LAMMERS (nee EXEL):
It's a boy!
"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1).
Proud parents, Henry and Nancy, give thanks to God for the precious gift of
SIMON HENRY
Simon entered the world weighing in at 10 lbs., 9 oz., at 4:26 p.m. on Oct. 9, 1996, at the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital, Burlington, Ont. Simon is the first grandchild of Hank and Rita Lammers of Burlington, Ont., and a fourth grandson for Henry and Margaret Exel of Brussels, Ont.

Thank You

VISSCHER:
Thank you to so many of you who blessed us by coming to our open house to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. Such a blessed time to share with family, friends and acquaintances. Thank you for all the cards, phone calls and visits to the house. We thank God for His faithfulness towards us. We also take this opportunity to wish all of our friends much joy this Christmas season and God's richest blessing for 1997.
Peter and Willy Visscher.

Cancellation

TERPSTRA:
Due to illness, the **December 14 open house** of
CLARENCE and JESSIE TERPSTRA's
50th wedding anniversary **has been cancelled**. We pray that our heavenly Father will continue to guide and keep them in His loving care.
Home address: 779 Queenston Rd., R.R. 4, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0

Obituaries

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Ps.116:15). On Wednesday, Nov. 27, 1996, at the age of 60, our dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle
CLARENCE BOOTSMA
was called home to his Lord and Savior. We grieve his absence; we rejoice in the life he now lives, seeing Jesus face to face.
Lovingly remembered by:
Case & Jenny Bruulsema — Ancaster
Jim & Margaret Bootsma — Mississauga
Ted & Corrie Bootsma — North York
Andy & Diane Bootsma — Ottawa
nephews and nieces.
We pray for our Lord's shepherding care over his wife Clara, their children, and grandchildren.

Caregiving Needed

Host family required for wheelchair-bound mom and healthy four-month-old baby (longterm). Respite and support services will be available. Caregiver will be financially compensated. If interested, please call **Rehoboth Home, Springfield, Ont., (519) 765-4207**, for more information.

Personal

Single male, 5'6", 150 lbs., **likes to meet Christian lady**, 50-65, who likes country living, St. Catharines/Hamilton area. Please send letters to **File #2657, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.**

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Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Classis meeting:

—**Classis Hamilton** will meet in regular session on **Jan. 21, 1997**, at the Jarvis CRC. All materials for the agenda must be in the hands of the stated clerk no later than Dec. 10, 1996.
Jacob Kerkhof, Stated Clerk.

Attention: All churches Please inform us of important changes. Items under "Church News" will be included free of charge.

Send your questions to
Peter and Marja.
Confidentiality is assured.

For rent

APARTMENTS: Redeemer College has **2- and 4-bedroom, furnished apartments available.** Can be rented daily, weekly or monthly at reasonable rates. No lease required. Please call **(905) 648-2131, ext. 260 or 290.**

Teachers

THUNDER BAY, Ont.: Thunder Bay Chr. School requires a **half-time teacher** to fill maternity leave position **from January to June 1997**, to teach Grade 8/9 literature, Bible, creative writing. Send resume to:
Thunder Bay Chr. School
R.R. #2, Arthur St. W.
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1
or
Fax (807) 939-2843

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Send this coupon to us and enclose a cheque for **$43.50 (or $35 US)**, payable to *Christian Courier*, for the following new subscriber:

Name: _____

Address: _____ **Town/City:** _____ **Code:** _____

Please also send the book to:

Name (of present subscriber): _____

Address: _____ **Town/City:** _____ **Code:** _____

Note:
- This offer is not valid for subscription renewals.
- Cheque/money-order must be enclosed with this coupon
- Offer expires **December 31, 1996.**

Send to: Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Classifieds

Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Miscellaneous

Langley Christian Schools

invites applications for an

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL
for K-5 Campus of 330+ students
and a possible
MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
for 6-8 level of 180 students.

LCS is a well-established interdenominational Christian school going through building and growth changes. We are in need of visionary, energetic, educational leaders who are able to function as part of a K-12 administrative team.

Please forward complete applications or direct enquiries to:

Leo Smit, Principal
21789-50th Avenue
Langley, BC V3A 3T2
Telephone: (604) 533-2222 or fax: (604) 533-7276.

Rimbey Christian School

located in Central Alberta is accepting applications for a **high school position** starting **September 1997.**

The Rimbey Christian School is a dynamic inter-denominational school with 140 students. Grade 10 was added in 1995, Grade 11 in 1996 and Grade 12 will be added in September 1997.
We are looking for a dynamic Christian individual who will help to develop the high school program in the math, socials and phys ed areas.

Please send resumes to:
Mr. Henry Vandermeer, Principal
Rimbey Christian School
Box 90, Rimbey, AB T0C 2J0
Phone/Fax (403) 843-3904 (school)
Phone (403) 782-7962 (home)

Bulkley Valley Chr. School, Smithers, B.C.

With our present principal retiring, we invite qualified people to apply for the position of

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

starting the 1997/98 school year.

Please send resumes and enquiries as soon as possible (deadline: December 20, 1996) to:

Principal Search Committee
c/o Mr. Ed Adema
Site 37, Comp. 8, R.R. #1
Smithers, BC V0J 2N0
Home phone: (604) 847-3080
Business phone: (604) 847-3981
Fax: (604) 847-4799

THE GREATER WINNIPEG SOCIETY FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
operating
Calvin Christian School
Winnipeg, Manitoba
is seeking applications for the position of

PRINCIPAL

Calvin Chr. School offers a Christ-centred education to 357 students (K to 9) from various denominations in the Greater Winnipeg area. Applicants must qualify for Manitoba certification (60 hours minimum in education courses).

Please send your resume and statement of educational philosophy to:

Principal Search Committee
c/o Len Hordijk
425 Bonner Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2G 1B4
For further information call
(204) 338-7981

Closing date for applications: **January 15, 1997**

Thunder Bay Christian School
seeks

PRINCIPAL—ADMINISTRATOR

to begin **August 1997**
The school is SK-9, with 9 full-time staff, and 6 part-time. TBCS was founded in 1962 and by the grace of God has been blessed with continued growth. Present enrollment is 268.
This school adheres to the Reformed Creedal Standards. Compensation is based on O.A.C.S. administrator's grid. Picturesque Thunder Bay is situated along Lake Superior, serving a community of approximately 140,000, in the geographical centre of Canada.
Deadline for applications is **January 15, 1997.**
For further information contact,
Edward Breukelman, phone/fax (807) 475-6979 or send application to:
Edward Breukelman
Search Committee
c/o Thunder Bay Christian School
R.R. #2, Arthur St. W., Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1

VICE-PRINCIPAL NEEDED

Lacombe Chr. School, located in central Alberta, and serving a student body of 375 students, requires a Vice-Principal for the 1997-98 school year. Duties will include both teaching and administrative duties. Candidates must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Please send inquiries and/or resumes to: **John Piers, Principal, Lacombe Chr. School, 5206 - 58 Street, Lacombe, AB T4L 1G9.**
Phone: (403) 782-6531 or Fax: (403) 782-5760.
Deadline for applications is **January 15, 1997.**

Self Discovery of Imprisoned Persons (S.I.P.)

Further to the "Profile Story" by Albert Vander Mey in the Sept. 13, 1996, issue of *Christian Courier*, we also wish to inform CC readers of the

SCOPE OF S.I.P.'s MINISTRY (since 1983)

Provincial Institutions:
Brantford Jail (12 years)
Burtch Correctional Centre (10 years)
Guelph Correctional Centre (9 years)
Niagara Correctional Centre (6 years)
Toronto West Correctional Centre (3 years)

Several and/or occasional visits to the following provincial institutions:
Barrie Jail
Chatham Jail
Don Jail, Toronto
Guelph Detention Centre
Hamilton Detention Centre
Maplehurst Correctional Institution, Milton
Millbrook Correctional Institution
Ontario Correctional Institution, Brampton
Waterloo Detention Centre

Psychiatric Institions visited:
Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital
Homewood Psychiatric Hospital, Guelph

Youth Detention Centres:
Blue Water Youth Correctional Centre, Kincardine
Arrell Youth Correctional Centre, Hamilton

Federal Institutions:
Joyceville Penitentiary
Millhaven Penitentiary
Warksworth Penitentiary

See Calendar on page 19...

The Living Word
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CRC
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210 Clarke St. N.
Woodstock, ON N4S 7M7
Phone: (519) 539-2117

Classifieds

Job Opportunities

Christian Stewardship Services is seeking a
SECRETARY
to work about 30-40 hours per week at their downtown Toronto office. **Responsibilities:** secretarial work — typing letters, preparing bulk mailings, answering phones, etc.
Requirements: proficient in Word for Windows 95, typing skills (at least 35-40 wpm), office experience an asset.
Please send resume to **#210-455 Spadina Ave., Toronto, ON M5S 2G8, or fax to (416) 977-4611. If you have any questions, feel free to call CSS at (416) 598-2181.**

Miscellaneous

Interested in placing an ad?

Get in touch with us for details.

Miscellaneous

Support Reformed Faith Witness (RFW)

The undersigned, members of RFW's Board of Directors, urge all readers of Christian Courier to consider making a financial gift before December 31, 1996. Reformed Faith Witness, the new publisher of Christian Courier, is a newly formed charitable organization which just received tax exempt status and its own registration number from Revenue Canada. (See story in CC, Dec. 6, 1996). Your help will give us a real shot in the arm! Send your cheque and coupon below, and we will issue an official receipt.

Gary Van Eyk, Pres.
Nelly Westerhoff, Secr.
Harry der Nederlanden
Sylvan Gerritsma
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Registration No. 1092873-47

❑ Yes, please enter my/our name on your mailing list and keep me/us informed about Reformed Faith Witness.

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Name: _____ **Amount:** _____

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P.S.: CC subscription and advertising payments are not tax deductible, but you are free to send an extra amount as a donation to RFW. Please note: Only amounts $10 or over which are clearly designated to Reformed Faith Witness will be officially receipted.

Job Opportunities

SEEKING A PASTOR

Horizon Community Church, a new CRC ministry of 100 families, is seeking a pastor. The church is located in the thriving suburban community of Highlands Ranch, a part of the **Denver Metropolitan area**. Key to the church's program is Bible-based dynamic preaching, enthusiastic worship, and sharing of the gospel in active outreach to a suburban community. Essential to the church's development is continued facilitation of the merging of two congregations and leadership for staff ministry. Please send inquiries and/or resumes to the **Search Committee, Horizon Community Church, 7140 S. Colorado Blvd., Littleton, CO 80122.**

Calgary Christian School
seeks a
SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Calgary Christian School (CCS) is a well-established, interdenominational school with 635 students in grades K-12.
A **Secondary Principal** is required to direct and oversee the operations of the secondary campus with a staff of 20 and approximately 225 students in grades 8-12.
The Principal must be able to articulate a sound vision of Christian education and be committed to working as a member of an administrative team.
CCS seeks a principal with training and experience in Christian educational leadership and excellent communication and interpersonal skills. The successful candidate must be qualified for Alberta Teaching Certification.
Please send resume, a statement of your vision of Christian education and leadership, and references to:

Mr. J. Lindemulder, Chairperson of the Board
Calgary Christian School, 2839-49 Street S.W.
Calgary, AB T3E 3X9
Phone: (403) 242-2896
Fax: (403) 242-6682

Seeking a Communications Co-ordinator

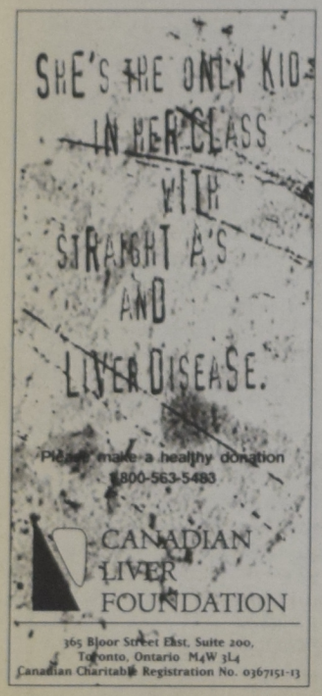
The **Lighthouse Ministry** is a multicultural diaconal outreach of the Christian Reformed Church in downtown Toronto. It seeks a **Communications Co-ordinator** to be responsible for encouraging involvement, prayer and financial support for the ministry. Position starts February 3, 1997. The job involves:
- **Church Relations:** develop new initiatives for involvement, co-ordinate written and oral communications.
- **Fund Raising:** special projects, grant proposals.

If you feel God may be calling you to this ministry, please send a resume and a 1-2 page writing sample by **December 31, 1996,** to:

Adrian Vandenberg, Executive Director
The Lighthouse, 1008 Bathurst St., Toronto, ON M5R 3G7
Phone: (416) 535-6262, Fax: (416) 535-3293

Classifieds/Events

Miscellaneous | **Miscellaneous** | **Miscellaneous** | **Miscellaneous**



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The fines are a real nuisance and can be substantial. So we need your help to avoid them. We kindly ask for your co-operation in promptly notifying us. And please take a minute to check the label on your CC copy to see if your current address is correctly shown. If not, please inform us. **Thank you for your continuing support!**

Circulation Manager
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Zondag 7:00 p.m.

Kingston: CFRC-FM 101.9 FM
Zondag 12:00 middag

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Multiple Sclerosis
Society of Canada

Thank You!

A warm thank you to the ladies of ***Holland Christian Homes,*** *Brampton, Ont., for helping us put together that very special full page of greetings included in the Dec. 6, 1996, Christmas issue of* Christian Courier. *Many of you — especially Mrs. Fenna Groen — have assisted CC for years. We appreciate it a lot and wish you and all other HCH residents a "blessed Christmas and God's care in the year 1997."*

Stan de Jong
C.C. Staff

CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS NEED CHRISTIAN TEXTBOOKS

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Executive Director

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Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

Dec. 14 G.F. Handel's "Messiah," will be performed by the Niagara Symphony Chorus, orchestra and soloists, 8 p.m., Calvary Church, 89 Scott St., **St. Catharines**, Ont. (The concert will be repeated Dec. 15 at 3 p.m.). Info./tickets: (905)687-4993.

Dec. 14-21 Christmas concerts by the Ontario Chr. Music Assembly (Leendert Kooij, director) with Andre Knevel at the organ, **Dec. 14:** 8 p.m., Melrose United Church, 86 Homewood Ave., **Hamilton,** Ont.; **Dec. 18:** 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **Bowmanville,** Ont.; **Dec. 21:** 8 p.m., Willowdale United Church, **Willowdale**, Ont. For info./tickets call (416) 636-9779.

Dec. 14-15 Handel's "Messiah" presentations by the "Laudate Dominum Choir" and the "Chatham Christian High School Concert Choir" (Barbara Mavin, director). **Dec. 14:** 8 p.m., Redeemer College Auditorium, **Ancaster,** Ont. Guest organist: Jan Overduin. Tickets at the door ($10/$8 seniors/students). Proceeds for RC; **Dec. 15:** St. Paul's Congregational Church, 450 Park Ave., **Chatham**, Ont. With organ and orchestra. Free will offering. Proceeds: Salvation Army. Info.: (519) 352-6081.

Dec. 15 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Peter Van Egmond, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster,** Ont.

Dec. 16 Christmas concert and carol-sing-song with the 100-voice "Hosanna Mixed Choir" and the "Bell" choir of Calvin Chr. School. At 7:45 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont. Freewill offering.

Dec. 22 "A Festival of nine Lessons and Carols," featuring the Mississauga Choral Society (Chrys A. Bentley, director), at 4:30 p.m., St. Dominic's Church, Cawthra & Atwater, **Mississauga,** Ont. Free-will offering. Info.: (905)278-7059.

Dec. 27 "The Ambassadors" present their annual "Alleluia Concert," with Laura Pin (piano) and Michael Pin (clarinet). Includes audience participation. At 8 p.m., First CRC, Charlton & Hess, **Hamilton,** Ont. Admission $6 at the door. Info.: (905) 389-2104.

Jan. 3-4 New Year's concerts by organists Andre Knevel and Willem van Suydam. Audience participation! Both events at 8 p.m. **Jan. 3:** Chalmers United Church, **Woodstock,** Ont.; **Jan. 4:** Central Presb. Church, **Hamilton**, Ont.

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News

Canadian Race Relations Foundation a reality

COURTESY DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF CANADA

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — The appointment of Lincoln M. Alexander as first chairperson of the long-awaited Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF) was met with applause by a large contingent of usually reserved news media when Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women Dr. Hedy Fry announced it at a recent news conference in Toronto.

Alexander was previously federal Minister of Labor, chair of the Workers' Compensation Board of Ontario and Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. He will head a board of 15 members chosen from communities across Canada. The foundation's headquarters will be located in Toronto; executive director will be Moy C. Tam of Ottawa, a social scientist whose professional experience includes direction of immigrant services, membership in a task force on literacy and participation in the Ontario commission on systematic racism in the criminal justice system.

Fundamental goodness in Canadians?

The CRRF will facilitate the development, sharing and application of knowledge and expertise in order to contribute to the elimination of racism and all forms of racial discrimination in Canada. The foundation will act at arm's length from the federal government and will receive a one-time endowment of $24 million. Half of this sum is provided for under the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement in recognition of injustices suffered by Japanese Canadians during and after the Second World War. Fry praised the generosity of Japanese Canadians in having made this gesture. Future financing of the CRRF will come from the interest on its endowment and fund raising activities, said Fry.

Lincoln Alexander says he is delighted that Prime Minister Chretien had asked him to chair the CRRF; he made it quite clear that he regards his chairmanship as much more than a token appointment. While highly proud of Canada's worldwide reputation for its multicultural policies and acceptance of diversity, he acknowledged that there was still a great deal of work to be done. He said he believed that every effort should be devoted toward convincing the young of the positive benefits that interracial and intercultural understanding can bring.

"I share ... the belief that there's a fundamental goodness in Canadians and accept as a fact that Canadians don't want their kids either to practice discrimination or be the victims of discrimination. Youngsters are not born as bigots; it's our obligation to society to make sure they never become bigots. I want the CRRF to become a force for appealing to the best side of human nature."

Re-evaluating 25 years of multiculturalism

Bert Witvoet

The establishment of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation marks the 25th anniversary of an ongoing multicultural policy.

That policy was begun in 1971 when Prime Minister Trudeau announced it in the House of Commons and Canada became the first country in the world to adopt such a policy.

Since that time, Canada has become more and more diverse. According to the 1991 census, four per cent of Canadians reported Aboriginal origins; 29 per cent, a British-only origin; 24 per cent, a French-only origin; 12 per cent, at least one other origin in addition to British or French; which leaves 27 per cent for origins other than the above.

Fewer than 400,000 Canadians reported Dutch-only origins, but a million say that they are either Dutch-only or have Dutch as their second ethnic ancestry.

Elusive, controversial vision

In a report entitled "Strategic Evaluation of Multiculturalism Programs", issued by the Department of Canadian Heritage in March 1996, Canada's vision of itself as a multicultural nation is seen as "a pursuit of a sometimes elusive and controversial vision of a multicultural society in which people retain their heritage, languages and cultural identifications, while enjoying the full benefits of a citizenship founded on shared rights, freedoms and obligations."

One prominent critic of multiculturalism, Neil Bissoondath, who wrote *Selling Illusions: the Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*, believes that multiculturalism encourages "the wholesale retention of the past," perpetuates the concept of the "everlasting immigrant," emphasizes "the importance of holding on to the former homeland" and stresses "differences between groups."

Bissoondath thinks that the absence of a strong Canadian citizenship and the existence of racism are both manifestations of the failure of Canadian multiculturalism.

But supporters of multiculturalism like Will Kymlikca, who wrote *Multicultural Citizenship* argue that multiculturalism actually helps immigrants to integrate into mainstream institutions and modify them.

Racism is often the result of the intentional and unintentional defense of privilege, rather than the failure of multiculturalism, says the multiculturalism report.

The budget for the Multicultural program is $18.7 million in fiscal year 1996-97 and $18.3 million in 1997-98. This is in addition to the one-time endowment of $24 million for the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

News Digest

Canadian companies win big in Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS (MTFP) — International Trade Minister Art Eggleton welcomed the success of Canadian information technology (IT) companies that participated in the COMDEX Fall Trade Show in Las Vegas, Nov. 18-22.

More than 60 Canadian IT companies offering a variety of computer hard- and software products (many Internet-related), as well as supplies and furnishings, took part in the massive show featuring new products at 2,100 booths and drawing 200,000 visitors daily, including a high proportion of senior decision makers.

Among the successes, a first-time exhibitor, Scholars.com from Fredericton, N.B., a leader in IT training, landed contracts that will double its revenues in the next year by an anticipated $2 million in sales, and enable them to hire 10 new employees.

The contribution to Canadian GDP by information technology and telecommunications industries was $30 billion in 1994, and included some 15,000 firms employing about 300,000 people.

Canadian books spotlit at Mexican book fair

GUADALAJARA, Mexico (MTFP) — The richness of Canadian culture and export potential was on display at Latin America's largest book fair here Nov. 30-Dec. 8.

The Guadalajara International Book Fair featured exhibitors from 25 countries. Canada was this year's honored guest, and was given prominent exhibition space for its writers and publishers. Canada was represented by 24 English-language and 11 French-language companies.

The fair's grand entrance space featured the works of Canadian illustrators of youth literature. Prior to the fair, a "round table" in Mexico City was held to foster business links and co-operation between Aboriginals of Canada and Mexico. The new Canadian Consulate in Guadalajara was also inaugurated on Nov. 29. The Consulate has been established with the goal of increasing commercial relations between Canada and Western Mexico.